

BENGAL INTERFACE ASIA & INDIA: SOCIAL SCIENCE APPROACH TO HISTORICAL LINKS AND CONTEMPORARY CONVERGENCES

(Texts in Transcription)



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INTRODUCTION

Bengal has a rich heritage culture representing its global connectivity, if not politically but culturally through ages. Bengal is connected with Asia especially with Southeast Asia which stands in a closer geographical proximity to Bengal. Centre for Social Science and Humanities, University of Calcutta had taken up this important subject into considerations and the Centre organized a two-day International seminar, which covered up the context of Bengal Interface Asia on one hand and Bengal Interface other culture of India on other hand.

It was an attempt on part of the Director of the Centre to bring all social science departments of Alipore Campus, University of Calcutta under one platform and develop an event where social scientists of different subjects present their research on different aspects of the seminar under review.

Beginning from the aspects of archaeological connectivity and passing through the historical phases of ancient Bengal history through the era of Islamic culture, the context of colonial age and finally the events of post-colonial activities. Although culture remains the basic motive of discussion in gradual course of narration trade, commerce and other social aspects also became an integral part of the seminar. Looking at Asian culture we see how “Bangla” was connected with parts of Southeast Asia, through ages. Looking at contemporary context we understand how still we maintain relations with ASEAN.

Bengal Interface India represents narration of Bengali culture interface with Tamil, Rajasthan, Kerala and Maharastra culture. It is really alluring to know that Bengali rhyme to make a child sleep talked off “Marathi Bargi”. On other hand the interaction of Rajasthani’s Kalakand with Bengali Rasogolla also demonstrated one unknown facet of Bengal’s interaction with Rajasthan.

Considering importance of seminar subject we prepared this textual transcription to keep a record of this important academic event. As a Director of the Centre, I hope it is an important addition in the realm of Bengal study.

Lipi Ghosh

Director, Centre for Social Science and Humanities

University of Calcutta

March 31, 2019

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM SOUTHWESTERN PART OF BENGAL COAST FOR UNDERSTANDING INTERACTION WITH SOUTH EAST ASIA FROM THE EARLIEST TO THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

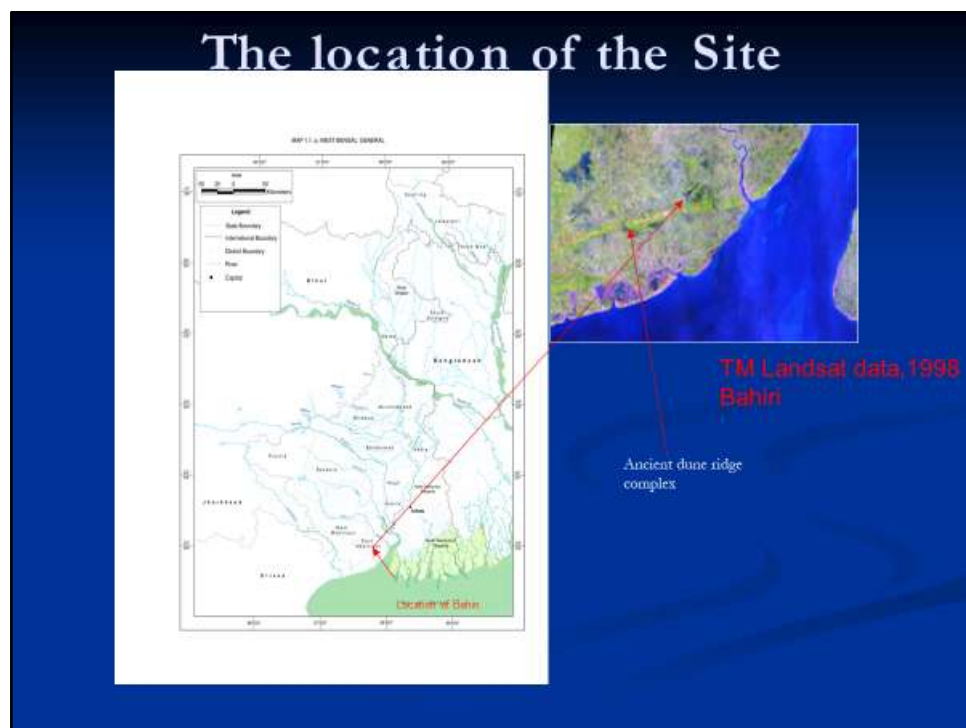
Kaushik Gangopadhyay

Asst. Professor, Department of Archeology, University of Calcutta

I'll be speaking on the archaeological evidence from south-western part of Bengal, Bengal' coast rather, for understanding interactions in South-East Asia from the earliest period to the medieval. Bengal's south-western coast has one of the few well known early ports on the Indian Ocean, such as Tamralipti, identified as modern Tamluk. The several references to this port are an indicator to the fact that the site was connected with places across the bay. The initial speculation by the archaeologists and historians working in the field was this that the port of Tamralipti was linked to the Indo-Roman trade network during the early centuries of Christian era. However archaeological data with regard to the Indo-Roman trade has now been revised and in this the port sites of Western India as well as peninsular India seems to be actively participating in the Indian ocean trade network as compared to the port sites on the northern sector of the eastern sea-port, which is roughly from the mouth of Krishna River to the Ganges delta. One reason for this is the lack of systematic excavations compared to the peninsular and western part of India, in the region that we are speaking about today. Systematic large scale excavations and handling of large amount of archaeological data, which is required for such kind of analysis is not available from the archaeological sites on the Northern region of the east coast of India. The current status of researches on the Indian Ocean trade network from the early historic to the early medieval and medieval has relied heavily upon systematic excavations of sites and detailed analysis of archaeological materials which includes a large body of data on ceramic and also scientific analysis. This kind of academic rigour has been somewhat absent in the region of West Bengal. Therefore, it is dangerous to attempt to answer questions related to interactions, trade, religious, or otherwise without substantive data from archaeological sites. However certain patterns may be discerned with the help of recently excavated field data by me and some of my colleagues about which I will speak in this paper.

So, as you can see the area in red is the region we are talking about, that's the south-western part of Bengal's coast, as we know, we do not have the time to get into the details of it, that Bengal's coasts can be divided into different geological segments, we are talking about

up to the south-western part, which roughly corresponds to the modern districts of Midnapore. So, this is the map of the region, which roughly corresponds to the modern district of Midnapore. In colonial period archaeology, and the decades following the independence, a few types of potteries were reported, which indicated trade networks such as the Roman amphora, the red polished ware, and roulette ware. In recent years it has been proved that these categories are generic, and not enough for the purpose of understanding networks, because these categories were applied in a very generic manner without taking into consideration varieties, types and subtypes. So these are the main points of discussion, the major sites in the south western part of coastal West Bengal, Tamluk, and a recently explored site called Bahiri, was occupied from roughly the 3rd Century BCE to the 3rd Century CE and continued to be occupied even during the early medieval period.



The long coastline of this region, indented by estuaries, on the banks of which were located the probable port sites and probable landing places. The high sand dunes could also provide the necessary protection to many of these ports where permanent settlements could be located whereas the landing places may have been on the open coast which could have been eroded now or they may have been submerged. The ceramics from these sites have been studied from the excavated context of Tamluk which was excavated in 1973-74, and Bahiri which was excavated by me in 2013 and also some of the sites have been explored by the author. So, the ceramics from Tamluk and Bahiri have been classified based on the typological similarities with North Indian and also sites from peninsular India. The major North Indian pottery types from the early-historic period in Tamluk are types which closely

resemble the Northern black polished ware, varieties of dishes in fine grey fabric, cooking vessels in grey ware, and also vessels for storing water. The South Indian variety of pottery of Tamluk includes dish with roulette pattern, which is commonly known as the roulette ware, the type 42, reported from Arikamedu, which has an internally folded rim, the type 10 variety of dish, also reported from Arikamedu, there were other pottery types of course, which can be classified as local, which evolved from the earlier proto-historic period, such as the black and red ware. At Bahiri, the early historic pottery is slightly different from Tamluk, and shows close affinity with Orissan sites such as Shishupalgarh. The ceramic assemblage from these two sites in South-Western coast of Bengal can be compared to the south-eastern ceramic data. Of course the roulette ware cannot be the yardstick only of interaction, as it has been found in more than 130 sites, from east coast as well as from South-East Asia, from the interior site of Biektahno in Myanmar, besides in Indonesia, Java and Bali, in the island region of South-east Asia. Important site on the east coast of India are Chandraketugarh, Tamluk, Dharanikota, Arikamedu and Alaganakulum. This pottery has also been reported from the site of Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka. The recent excavations at Mahasthangarh, and Khao Sam Kaeo in Thailand provided evidence of a pottery type, which has been designated by my colleague Colin Lefranq as fine grey ware bi-colour, which were found in the 3rd to 2nd Centuries BCE levels at Khao Sam Kaeo and also at other sites in Thailand.

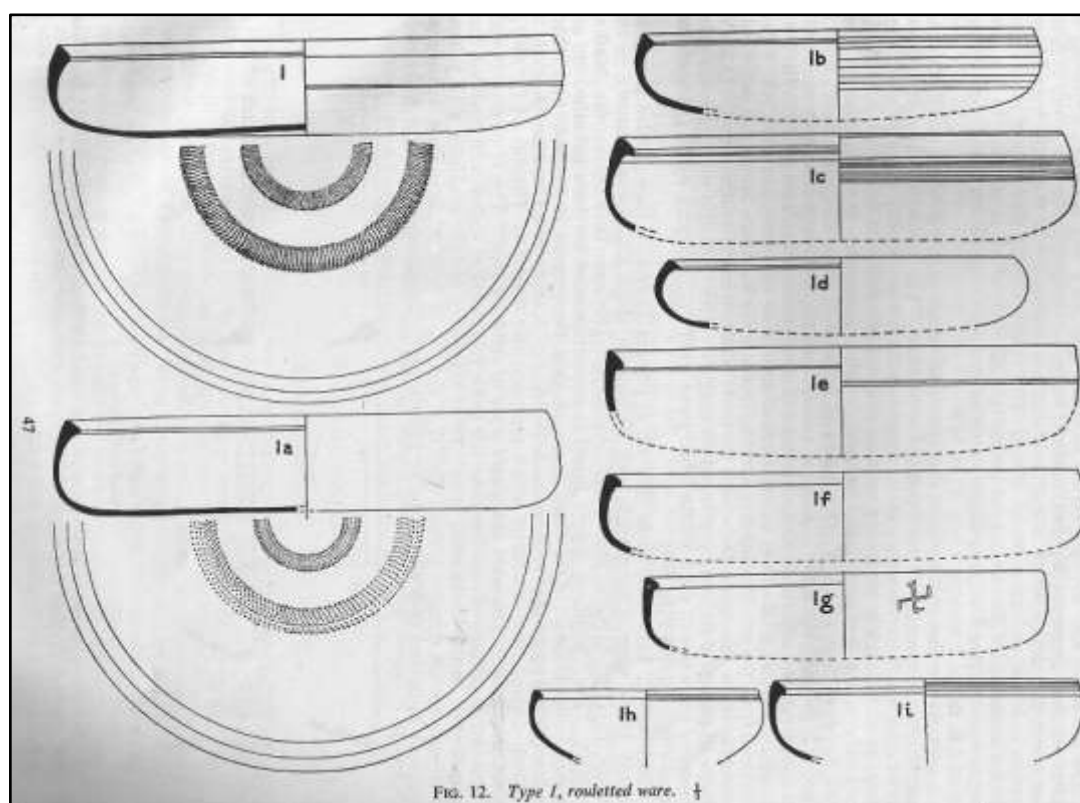


FIG. 12. Type 1, rouletted ware. $\frac{1}{4}$

1. Roulette Ware example: Ancient India: Volume 2

Another pottery type that Lefranq has drawn our attention to in a forthcoming article is the fine grey ware found at Mahasthangarh, Tissamaharama, and other sites in South-East Asia. Now again this ware is clearly reported in the 3rd to 2nd Centuries BCE as the earliest from this stratigraphic context. Colin Lefranq has studied the pottery from Bahiri along with me and she also has come to the conclusion that the very fine grey ware reported from Khao Sam Kaeo in Thailand is also present at Baheri. This type is also present in Tamluk, with folded rim and paddled impression on the body. So, we can see some of the pottery types Lefranq has identified in Mahasthangarh as well as Khao Sam Kaeo, because she had the access to the pottery, and together with Lefranq I have been also able to identify the same pottery types in Bahiri which is in the northern coast of, near Contai. Another type present at Khao Sam Kaeo is the fine wares in two colours, black inside and red outside, but with a centre knob. Now this is generally known as the knobbed ware and the published photographs and the drawings from Khao Sam Kaeo is quite convincing to me, that the same type is also present at Bahiri. Now, in recent years, last month actually, with the help of UGC UPE-II grant, we have been to Myanmar, myself and my colleague Dr. Rajat Sanyal, and the pottery types that we see on these two slides, one on your right hand side, this is from Bahiri, while on the left hand side is a decorated pottery from lower Myanmar, and you can easily find out the similarities in the body decorations and we're quite convinced that they are of the same typology and we have to go to the scientific level to analyze them to see whether they are actually coming from the same assemblage or not. This is from Tamluk and the same types of decoration we have found from sites in lower Myanmar. Again, we see, this is a pottery from Bahiri, excavated by myself, and the similar type of motif occurred on grey sheds at sites from lower Myanmar. However, when we come to the early medieval stage, we find that there is a certain kind of a change. So, as Colin Lefranq has pointed out, that many of the pottery shards that she finds in Mahasthangarh type and as also in Northern Bengal are reported again in South-East Asia, but we do not find similar types in South-Western Bengal, other than probably the glazed one, earlier one, the glazed pottery that you can see on the right hand side, and similar glazed pottery that we have recently documented from sites in lower Myanmar. So our question is whether there was a shift from South-Eastern part of Bengal during the early medieval time to Northern Bengal, as far as we can, you know, trace it using our ceramic data. You can see a similar type of pottery from lower Myanmar and similar type of pottery bowls are also reported from Bahiri. So I'm coming to the end of my presentation here with the famous issue of Martaban jars. These are brown glazed jars which were initially thought to be produced at a place called Martaban. In lower Burma so some of the areas where the jars were probably produced have been marked here, but recent research has also

claimed that some of these brown glazed jars were probably produced in Vietnam, from where they were traded to Martaban from the beginning of 13th Century CE and continued till the 17th Century CE, and from Martaban they were probably moved towards the west. There are some of the examples of the so called Martaban jars from Myanmar, and the right one is the latest discovery by our department, so you see the close-up of the Martaban jars from Myanmar, where on the extreme right hand side we have the same type, with strapped handles and glaze from a site on the Bengal-Odisha border, and again the similarities are so striking, that one can easily find out that these so-called Martaban jars had reached South-western Bengal. The problem is that again, the dating of this site because these Martaban jars, as I said, has a long chronology from 13th Century to 17th Century, so one needs to actually be very pointed, when one talks about interactions based on these kind of ceramic evidence from surface collection. So these are my conclusions and my conclusion indicates, as I said, that archaeology requires systematic large-scale excavations, requires analysis of lakhs of ceramic shards, like they have done in Pattanam or like they have done in Arikamedu, or elsewhere in the world and like they are doing in Khao Sam Kaeo in Thailand. One cannot base your analysis on only one or two shards, but we have made a beginning and the presentation I have made to you clearly points out that other than the so called generic pottery types which we know as the roulette ware, because roulette wares, you know, they have also different varieties and sub-varieties, there are other common pottery types which we find in South-Western Bengal, as also in other parts of Bengal, and in South-East Asian sites. Only thing is that we need to have more systematic excavations, analysis of large data, and I'm sure after which we'll come to a definite conclusion about the time period of the ceramic shards, whether there is a shift in the network, I think it can be done with Mahasthangarh being excavated now very properly, and also we look forward to more excavations in our part of Bengal, in South-Western Bengal.

So I acknowledge the University of Calcutta for granting a UGC-UPE-II scheme, for which we were able to go to Myanmar and my colleague Dr. Rajat Sanyal and lastly Professor Lipi Ghosh for organizing this very important workshop.

Thank you

A TALE OF TWO PORTS – TAMRALIPTA AND SAMANDAR AND ITS CONNECTED HISTORY WITH SOUTH EAST ASIA

Suchandra Ghosh, Professor, Sayantani Pal, Associate Professor
and Sudipa Ray Bandyopadhyay, Professor

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A very good afternoon to you all, respected Professor Ranjit Sen, our Ranjit da, Professor Lipi Ghosh, Lipi di and Professor Suthipand from Thailand, and my dear colleagues from my department, from my sister departments, students from different colleges. It just really indeed a very happy occasion that all the social science disciplines are converging here today, and which is under the edges of the centre for humanities and social sciences, to which Lipi di is giving able leadership. So it is nice to see that all my fellow colleagues, from Department of Philosophy, from South-East Asian Studies, history, everywhere, that we are here today to actually talk about Bengal's interface with South-east Asia or Asia in general. Now as you have seen that it is a joint presentation, with my colleagues Sudipa and Sayantani. Kaushik actually provided a wonderful background into our presentation, because we shall also be talking about Tamralipta, one of the important ports of early historical period, but we have not used archaeological sources which Kaushik has done, so the two papers actually correlate well when we are talking about Tamralipta.

Throughout history sailing was an important means of communication between the Eastern coast of India and distant lands of South-east Asia through the Bay of Bengal. The east coast experienced a lively maritime network with the presence of important ports, which were if I use the expression by Michael Pierson, 'gems in the necklace of the coast'. These were nodes of mercantile organization and hubs through which connections were fostered. There were three coastal sectors in the east - namely the Bengal coast, the Andhra-Kalinga coast and the Coromandel Coast. Among the regions of early Bengal, which is, as you know, that early Bengal was a conglomeration of several sub-regions; there was nothing called Bengal in the period that I'm talking about. So, interaction with regions of South-East Asia is also well recognized, and here we're trying to say that, when we talk about India's interaction with South-East Asia, it is actually a misnomer; we have to understand that it is a region to region contact - some areas of India were in contact with some areas of South-East Asia. So, broadly it is India-South-East Asia, but actually we're talking about the regional contacts, the regions from India and regions from South-East Asia.

So by Bengal we, of course mean the present day West Bengal and Bangladesh. The Bay of Bengal network is inextricably interlocked with the mainland and maritime South-East Asia. When we talk about ports, we know that a port does not stand in isolation, the degree of its integration with its hinterland and foreland is a crucial factor and emergence of a port to a greater prominence. Integral to port are sailors and mariners and we have reference to sailors and sailings across the Bay of Bengal to the land of Suvarṇabhūmi and Suvarṇadvīpa in our Jataka stories and epigraphic data. In this presentation on the basis of largely epigraphic and textual data the two ports of early Bengal which were connected with regions of south-east Asia would be studied. Art-historical linkages would also be understood from the perspective of point of dissemination. Thus there are movements of common men, merchants and boats and also ideas from these two ports Tamralipta and Samandar. So in this paper we've taken these two ports and we're trying to show that how through these ports there were movements of ideas, travelers and everything, and how, when we look at the art-historical linkages, then how these some of the elements were actually moving through either Tamralipta or South-eastern Bangladesh, the port which is called Samandar.

Now let me come to Tamralipta. It is the early historical period in Bengal, when it was the premier port, and which Kaushik also told, that it is identified with largely Tamluk in Midnapore district of West Bengal. In the mid of 3rd Century CE, people travelled to China and South-East Asia from the port of Tamralipta. Attention here may be drawn to an information given by Kangtai, the envoy of the Wu kingdom to Funan (Cambodia), in around 245-250 CE and now preserved in T'ai-p'ing Yu-lan. According to the account of Kangtai, Yueh-chih (i.e Kushana) merchants regularly brought horses to the Koying country by sea. The king buys them all. If one of the horses is dead during the voyage and has to be helped by the mane, when it is shown to the king, the latter buys it at half price. Thus in the 3rd Century CE, horses were in great demand in Koying. That was the importance of horses which actually Professor B. N. Mukherjee pointed out in a narration long time back. Koying has been identified either with the eastern locality of the Malay Peninsula or the east coast of Sumatra. Thus in the third century horses were in great demand. The most likely point of maritime contacts between the Malay Peninsula and the North India seems to have been the Bengal littorals. Further evidence of trade relation between Bengal and South-East Asia is also suggested by a passage in the Liang-shu. According to the Liang-shu, an envoy called Su-wu was sent by a king of Funan to Tienchu, during the epoch of the Wu dynasty in China (220-280 AD) and sometime before Kang Tai's visit to Funan. He received from a king of Tien-chu four horses of the Yueh-chih country. Kang Tai in his Funan-chuan identifies the

river of Tien-chu with the Ganges and locates its mouth in the territory of Tan-mei i.e. Tamralipti. Hence Tamralipti must be the port used by Su-Wu while taking the Yueh-chih horses to Southeast Asia. Thus Chinese sources indicate that Fu-nan took a leading part in Southeast Asia's trade with India. The traders from Vanga probably had a settlement at or near Oceo in the Mekong delta where there was an emporium of the Funan kingdom. The best quality horses were generally not indigenous to India and were brought from Ferghana area of Central Asia to Taxila traversing the route which is now broadly known as Karakorum highway. From Taxila the route ran till Varanasi wherefrom it entered the region of ancient Vanga either by land or by the Gangetic route. From coastal Bengal horses were transshipped to certain ports of South-East Asia through the ports of Chandraketugarh or Tamralipti by sea. Export of horses is perhaps substantiated by a seal from Chandraketugarh (North 24 Parganas) displaying a vessel of the trapyaka type, having the figure of a horse in the right hand field. The seal inscription is the earliest known visual representation of the shipping of a horse in the context of an ancient Indian port, going back as early as 3rd Century CE. From the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, we learn that the trapyaka, type of vessels were meant for sailing along the coast and to South-East Asia.

The expansion of coastal network in the sub-continent in the earliest centuries of the Common Era indicates thus at subsistent growths such as agricultural products, textile etc. form an important component of this network. Naturally Bengal was very much a part of this thriving coastal trade network. In addition to this Bengal perhaps traded in grains with some areas of South-east Asia. It is well-known that the valleys of the major rivers in the mainland provide a natural environment for flourishing agriculture, and so the terrain in Thailand and Cambodia can be terraced for rice cultivation without much difficulty. Logically the mainland of South-east Asia did not have any demand for paddy from Bengal or any other region. But if we consider the terrain, which is dominated by the Tenasserim range running longitudinally as a broken chain closer to the west coast than the east, we find that the west coast is denied of vast agricultural land and it is mostly rocky and covered with evergreen forest, rainforest. So the coastal society in the west coast needed to import grain in exchange of the mineral wealth. 'Vanga' with its abundance of paddy could have been a likely participant in this trade network. Seals from Vanga displaying sailing crafts with stalks of grain are definite pointers to this fact.

In the third century, (next slide) the Buddhist text 'Divyavadana' narrates the account of Ashoka's son and daughter to Sri Lanka from Tamralipta. If you believe in this account then the antiquity of the port may be pushed back to the 3rd Century BCE. The account

nevertheless highlights the role of Tamralipta in the Bay of Bengal network in the 2nd - 3rd Century CE when the text 'Divyavadana' was written. Besides it also indicates that the important powers used to maintain connection with this port. This is not quite unexpected; the very name 'tamralipta' suggests that this place rose to prominence from its importance as a source of copper which was mined nearby at Ghatsila in the Singhbhum district. Obviously the mighty Magadhan power would want to maintain linkage with this region for its copper resources.

Tamralipta's linkage with South-East Asia is again highlighted in the accounts of three Chinese pilgrims - Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing. From Tamralipta Faxian boarded a merchant vessel directly to Sri Lanka in 415 CE. There from he went to Java and eventually he reached China. The account of Xuanzang informs us that Tamralipta was a port where land and maritime routes converged. Xuanzang refers to the people of Tamralipta as rich; he states that wonderful articles of value and gems were collected there in abundance. Yijing in the late 7th Century described his overseas journey from Tamralipta to Sri Vijaya, southern part of Sumatra, across the Bay of Bengal. He clearly states that there were two routes connecting India and China. One was a land route. The other was a sea route from Canton to Condore (Kumlung) through Malacca, Kedah, Pegu and Tamralipti. Thus he clearly indicates that Tamralipta was the port of embarkation and disembarkation of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims travelling between eastern India and Srilanka. So naturally it was the favoured port for embarking upon a journey to Southeast Asia.

An inscription of the 5th century cited frequently in connection to the maritime network between the Bengal coast and the Malay Peninsula is that of the 'Master Mariner' 'Mahanavika' Buddhagupta, a resident of 'Raktamrittikavasa'. Now we know that 'Raktamrittika' has been identified with the Lo-to-mo-chi monastery of Xuan Zang in Karnasuvarna where from seals bearing the legend raktamrittika mahavihara have been found. Here it has been assumed that this Buddhist mariner must have sailed along the Bhagirathi River to the sea-coast and then he might have sailed across the Bay of Bengal to reach the Malay Peninsula. It is very likely that the port of his departure was Tamralipta. Tamralipta also finds mention in certain texts, for example, Dandin's 'Dasakumaracarita'. It is a text of the 7th Century and there Tamralipta is referred to as a 'Velakula'. Among the different names of ports, 'Velakula' is also a very important term which identifies a port in Sanskrit literature. But the last known reference, particularly the epigraphic reference of Tamralipta is found in the 8th Century 'Dudhpani' rock inscription from Hazaribag. It states that three brothers from Ayodhya embarked on a journey for business to Tamralipta and they successfully amassed

lots of wealth from their commerce. This journey which is likely to have been by land route through Hazaribagh, thus also speaks of the extensive hinterland of the port of Tamralipta reaching up to the ancient Kosala country.

One needs to know that even when Tamralipta was at its zenith the trans-Meghna zone was growing in prominence in the maritime commerce with South-east Asia. Xuan Zang, who eloquently praised about Tamralipta's eminence did not fail to observe that Samatata by early 7th Century had already established as an area of maritime contacts with six areas in mainland Southeast Asia, viz, Shi-li-ch'a-ta-lo (Sriksheṭṭra, Prome in Myanmar), Kia-mo-lang-ka (Kamalanka, Pegu, Myanmar), To-lo-po-ti (Dvaravati in peninsular Thailand), I-shang-na pu-lo (Isanapura), Mo-ho-chen-po (Mahachampa), and Yen-niona-cheu (Yamanadvipa / Yavanadvipa - identification uncertain). Ijing also narrated that a Chinese pilgrim on his sea-borne journey from Sri Vijaya reached Ho-lai-ka-lo, in the easternmost part of eastern India. Ho-lai-ka-lo corresponds to Harikela which is identified, thanks to B.N. Mukherjee, with the region of Chittagong (Bangladesh). Thus we encounter here the emergence of Harikela in the maritime linkages in the Bay of Bengal with maritime South-East Asia. Thus the trans-Meghna zone was gaining prominence as trading areas at a time when Tamralipta in the western part of the Ganga delta was active.

Now we know that in the first half of the 9th Century Srivijaya sent a mission to the Pala rulers of the present Bihar and Bengal, in a move to expand the Srivijayan network. The Nalanda copperplate bears testimony to this. So the question is how did Srivijaya, a maritime polity connect with the landlocked Ganga valley in view of the fact that Tamralipta was no more active. Thus the port of Samandar in Harikela, was the only port in the vicinity in the vast hinterland of Ganga valley and Brahmaputra valley.

With the emergence of Samandar / Sudkawan as the major port of Bengal in Harikela (Chittagong area, Bangladesh) from the 9th Century onwards, the long-distance maritime network of Bengal rested largely in the eastern most part of the delta instead of the western sector of the Bengal delta. It will be logical to infer that the long-distance trade of the Ganga delta, the only outlet of the middle Ganga plains and also the Brahmaputra valley to the sea, shifted from the western to the easternmost sector of the delta with the waning of Tamralipta and the simultaneous emergence of Harikela as the principal point of early medieval Bengal's maritime trade.

Then I talk about the relationship and the connected history of the port of Samandar to Arakan. When we talk of Arakan, we all know that the coinage tradition of Harikela was

borrowed from Arakan. If you look at the map, you can see that Arakan and Harikela had a geographical continuum, so this geographical continuum actually helped in the interaction between these two regions, and so we have this wonderful Harikela coins which were largely influenced by the coins of the Arakan Chandras. Here we can talk of the coastal network between south-eastern Bengal to western and south-western Myanmar. Kaushik was talking of Martaban, so Martaban has been identified as 'Kalasapura' and we have three slokas from the 'Manjushrimulakalpa', which talks about the connected history of this region. The text, datable to around the eighth century CE, has at least three slokas referring to Harikela, Karmaranga and Kalasapura together. It talks of the worship of Tara, with the Yaksha king Mahavala. Where are they worshipped? In Harikela, Karmaranga, Kamarupa and the city called Kalasa. So Harikela we know is now in Chittagong region, Kamarupa is in Assam, Karmaranga has been identified as Arakan and then Kalasa is Kalasapura. Martaban played a very important role in the whole network between south-eastern Bangladesh and regions of Western and South-western Myanmar.

Finally we're talking also of art-historical linkages. How do we look at these art-historical products? We find that there was a strong connection between the Javanese bronzes and the bronzes from Harikela, and I'm not talking about the late Javanese bronzes, I'm talking about the early Eastern Javanese bronzes. If we look at the core production... we have done some comparative analysis and we find that when we look at the aureole and the pedestal we find the similarities. The similarities are not only on the icons. This linkage is also explained by the movement of the intellectuals, so we have, for example, the inscription of Kelurak, central Java. It mentions an Indian guru Kumaraghosha, who came from Gaudidvipa. This Gaudidvipa obviously relates to the Gauda region of Bengal and so we know that there were constant interactions between these regions.

Then I talk about the Ananda temple. It has been suggested that the main inspiration of the Pagan temples especially the Ananda temple, has to be traced to eastern India, particularly the Paharpur temple of present day Bangladesh. Scholars like S.K Saraswati and later on Claudine Bautze Picron had talked about the interaction between Pagan and Bihar, especially with Bodhgaya, Nalanda etc. This is very interesting. I was talking about Jhewari in Chittagong, where a cache of bronzes have been found and if we look at these bronzes carefully we'll find a lot of connectivity, connected history between the designs, the way it has been represented in different places, not only the Javanese bronzes, but also bronzes from peninsular Thailand. You can see the similarity in the treatment of the hair also. Connections between Pagan and Myanmar also could be understood from the representations of the

nativity; this is the nativity which is very common in this part of the world, but we find that such scenes were also found in regions of Myanmar and other places and it's actually throughout, it's true across different regions of South-East Asia, the nativity of Buddha. This is a very interesting evidence of Shiva Lokeshvara from Bengal, who has been transformed into Shiva-Buddha when we'll go to Cambodia. Now finally what do you see? The instances of similarity and linkages cited in the above passage are in no way conclusive. If one looks for, one would find many more examples of which a few are presented here. Linkages in the sphere of artifacts have not been discussed here; one could also look for interactions beyond the conventional sphere and not much work has been done. What were the agents which were responsible for such continuous interaction between the two regions, even today, remains a question. Many theories have been postulated to understand the process of interaction. One has to admit that there was adoption and adaption between the two regions. These twin processes of adoption and adaptation probably led to acculturation. This will lead to interesting questions like what were the historical contexts in which these interactions evolved. What were the avenues and agents of cultural transmission? How could certain specific ideas and forms in religion, art and literature get selected, assimilated and transformed into cultural context. So these are the questions which we have to address when we study relationship between India or Bengal and South-East Asia.

Thank you.

IMPACT OF BUDDHISM ON SOUTH EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES

Shyamasree Bhattacharya, Associate Professor

Department of Philosophy, University of Calcutta

Good afternoon, everybody! Before I begin my paper, I just want to say that I feel very privileged and honoured to be a part of this social science seminar, because as you are all aware, philosophy is not social science as it does not involve experiments, data collection, it is very much conceptual, involving analysis, clarification of concepts, and belongs to humanities. But I am very glad that the organisers have arranged the papers in such a manner that my paper is somewhat a continuation of the paper of the previous speaker but of a different nature. Professor Suchandra Ghosh (department of Ancient History) has shown the Buddhist connection between India and the South-East Asian countries. So my paper will be a continuation of her paper, but from a different perspective. And I am not going to use any PowerPoint, so you have to patiently listen to me, to what I say, and my paper is 'Impact of Buddhism in South-East Asian countries'. I want to make some preliminary remarks regarding the very idea of Buddhism, and how it has been explained in different ways. First of all we can classify Buddhism into four schools, the Mādhyamika Śūnyavāda, the Jogācāra Vijñānavāda, the Sautāntika and the Vaibhāṣika schools. But these four schools can be clubbed into two other heads that is the Hinayāna and the Mahāyāna, but the Hinayāna, the word itself is used in a very pejorative sense, used by the Mahāyāna Buddhists. The philosophers and historians refer to them as the Sthaviravādins or Sarvastivādins. So instead of Hinayana Buddhists, I will be referring to the Sthaviravadins and the Mahāyāna as the Bodhisattvavādins. I have divided my paper into three sections, the first one is exclusively devoted to what is meant by Buddhism, the four councils, which are held after a period of every hundred years, and the next two sections deal with the impact of Buddhism in South-East Asian countries, how it travelled from India to South-East Asian countries. I'll start with Radhakrishnan's famous saying, which is a foreword to *2500 years of Buddhism*, "All forms of Buddhism however agree that the Buddha was the founder, that he strove and attained transcendent wisdom as he sat under the Bodhi tree, that he pointed a way from the world of suffering to a beyond, the undying, and those who follow the path of liberation may also cross to the wisdom beyond. This is the root of the matter, the essential unity underlying the many differences in outlook and expression that came to characterize Buddhism as it spread from India to other parts of the world." Without repeating the trends of the transforming ideas of Buddhism of the different forms, one can refer directly to the emergence of the different

forms of Buddhism after the Parinirvāṇa of Buddha in 483 BCE, through the several Buddhist Councils in India and not to in other Buddhist Councils of the different Asian countries, in conformity with the principles involved in holding of the councils. The chief basis of holding of a council is to give a hearing to the dominant trend or to prevent any heterogeneous element from infiltrating into the fundamentals of Buddhism. In the first Council of India immediately after the great demise, 'Parinirvāṇa' of Buddha, the three great Theras, they were the disciples of Buddha, Upali, Ananda and Kashyapa, compiled the sayings of Buddha in three collections, called the Baskets or the Pitakas, these baskets as we all know, Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidhamma. There was a Second Council of the deviating school of Mahāsaṅghikās, one hundred years after the first Council, which emphasized not merely the sayings of Buddha, but also the different attitudinal processes of the different orders of personalities. In the Mahāsaṅghika School, the Buddha was interpreted as a Lokottara personality, this is what the Bodhisattva Buddhism has taken up, and this means a personality which is not ordinary, but of transcendent meditative order. The interpretation of Buddhism from the perspectives of higher orders of personalities, paved a path of transition from the first order of persons, the Arhats of Sthaviravādins to Bodhisattvas. I have to refer to Sthaviravādins and Bodhisattvavadins, because when I am referring to the South-East Asian countries and the impact of Buddhism we'll see how both these trends have influenced the South-East Asian countries. The emergent Bodhisattva form of Buddhism, which is concerned with the personality process of Bodhisattvas, fosters the process of sacrifice of one's personality process if touched by any tinge of intellectuality. For the sake of helping others attain the condition of nirvāṇa, besides the change in the notion of personality process and its objectives, there is a total change of the logical consciousness. The Buddha resisted all the theoretic propensities and simply persuaded the triadic discipline path of conduct, meditation and insightful experience of wisdom. These triads are not for discussion or arguments, but only ways of practices leading one to a final dispassionate condition. It is a development of a free man, free from prejudices, intent on working out a future with one's own ideas spirit on light. This is the reason that Buddha's humanism, which is due to his unrestricted experiential process, crossed the racial and the national boundaries. The impact of Buddhism was all over the Asian countries before and after the Christian era but was not an imposition upon the prevalent cultural processes of these Asian countries but was only a revelation of its own resolving process in its development.

Why and when did it take place? The result of the Buddhist impact on the basic cultural processes of the South-East Asian countries was only to help them detach from the

intellectual dogmas of any of their basic cultural processes. If we accept the general custom of using the reign of Ashoka as the landmark for the beginning of the missionary spread of Buddhism, we may say that the Buddhism reached the frontiers of India by the middle of the 4th century BCE. i.e., the beginning of the Common Era, it had spread beyond. In the early centuries of the era, Bodhisattvavād and the Sthaviravād spread in every direction, eventually certain areas would become predominantly Sthaviravādin and others predominantly Bodhisattvavādin. Bodhisattvavād came to dominate in East and Central Asia with the exception of Turkisthan, whereas Sthaviravādin monasteries flourished until the Muslim invasion and conversion of the region. Sthaviravād was slower to spread and in some foreign lands had to displace Bodhisattvavād. It lives on in a school that refers to itself as the Theravada, a Sinhala derivative of the Sthavira School. It spread throughout South-East Asia, where it continues to this day.

Now how did it spread and why was it so appealing to the South Asian countries? The encounter of the Buddhism with extra Indian ethnic roots and the increasing influence of the laity gradually transformed monastic child of Shramanic Buddhism into a universal religion.

This occurred in two ways, on the one hand monasticism adapted to the changing circumstances strengthened its ties to the laity and the secular authorities established a satisfactory mode of coexistence with the non-literary reforms of worship. Both Bodhisattvavād and the Sthaviravād schools participated in this aspect of the process of adaptation. But Buddhism refined its goals and renovated its symbols to create a new synthesis in some ways that may be considered a new religion. I do not know whether anyone is aware of Tantraism, Tantra-Buddhism, we have the Theravāda Buddhism then we have the Tantra. Tantraism is also the off shoot of the Bodhisattva Buddhism, and this is something which came after the amalgamation of the indigenous tribes of the South-East Asian countries and the main Buddhism, the Theravādā or Sthaviravāda Buddhism and I have to mention this, mostly the Theravāda Buddhism, is found in Thailand, Seylone, and Burma, Java, Sumatra. And the Bodhisattva Buddhism spread from India, via Tibet to the Central Asian countries that are to China, Japan and Korea. So mostly we have the Theravadā but we find specially the chronicles and the other relics, they support that there are both Sthaviravāda and Bodhisattvavāda presence in these South-East Asian countries. The new style, the Bodhisattvavāda, claimed to be the path for the many, the vehicle for the salvation of all sentient beings, ‘Mahāyāna’ it means ‘The great vehicle’. Its distinctive features, this is the Mahāyāna or Bodhisattva tilts towards world’s affirmation, a laicized conception of the human ideal, new ritual of devotion, and the new definitions of the metaphysical and the

contemplative ideals. Conventional wisdom labels the Buddhism of South-east Asia as Theravādā. Indeed, customarily a general distinction pertains between the Southern Theravādā Buddhism of South-east Asia, whose scriptures are written in Pali and the Northern Sanskrit Bodhisattvavādin of Central and East Asia. A Thai or a Burmese most likely thinks of the Buddhism of his country as a continuation of the Theravādā tradition, which was allegedly brought to the Golden Peninsula, that is the Suvarṇabhūmi by Ashoka's missionaries Sona, and Uttara in the 3rd century BCE. But modern scholarship has demonstrated that prior to the development of the classical South-East Asian states which occurred from the 10th or 11th Common Era, Buddhism in South-East Asia, the area covered by present day Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos - defies rigid classification. Both archaeological and chronicle evidence suggest that religious situation in the area was fluid and informal, with Buddhism characterized more by miraculous relics, and charismatic mantras, magical monks, than by organized sectarian traditions. In short, the early period of Buddhism in South-East Asia was diverse, eclectic, infused with elements of Hindu Dharmashastras, Brahmanic deities, Bodhisattvas such as lokeshvara, tantric practices, Sanskrit Sarvastivādin text, as well as the Pali Theravādā traditions. Now when I'm coming to the early development of the Buddhism in South-east Asian countries, from its early beginnings, (I'll just mention Burma or Myanmar I won't be able to cover Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia) I won't be able to do that, so, from the early beginnings the establishment of the major monarchical states of Buddhism in South-East Asia can only be characterized as diverse and eclectic. Its presence was felt as part of the Indian cultural influence that flourished throughout the area. During the early centuries, Buddhism competed successfully with the indigenous forms of magical animism and Brahmanism, undoubtedly becoming transformed in the process. In the East Asia, propagation followed where Padmasambhava type monks were subjugating territorial guardian spirits, monks accompanying traders and bringing in objects of power and protection such as relics and images as well as a literary tradition in the forms of magical chants in sacred languages and also written texts. We glean something of this pattern from Buddhist chronicles in Pali and in South-East Asian vernacular languages of a later time. When Sasanavamsa of Burma or the Mulasasana of Thailand relates the stories of the Buddha's visit to these countries to establish the religion, we interpret myth in historical times reading "the Buddha" to mean more advanced cultural tradition. While the chronicles more so than the early inscriptions paint a picture of dubious historical accuracy, they correctly associate Buddhism with a high continental way of life in contrast to the less sophisticated life of the tribal people. Buddhism then abets the development of a town or urban culture, provides symbols of trans-local value and articulated a world-view, in which

diverse communities can participate and find new identity, a language in which they can communicate and institutions in which an organized religious life can be pursued and systematically talked. What is the consequence of all these impacts on Buddhism? The consequence is the evidence cited, I haven't mentioned all the evidences, only some in Burma, I could not because of the shortage of time, the evidence which I have mentioned here, cited, supports the contention that throughout much of South-East Asia, Buddhism was present as part of the larger Indian cultural influence. Various sources ranging from testimony of Chinese and indigenous chronicles, diaries of Chinese monk travelers as well as the large amount of archaeological and inscriptional evidence supports the contention that both Bodhisattvavādins and Sthaviravādins existed side by side dependent on such factors as the particular regional Indian source and the predilection of a given ruler. Clearly, before the emergence of the major classical South-East Asian states, no standard form of Buddhism existed. Buddhism and monarchy, the relation between Buddhism and the rise of the monarchical states, in the classical period, the diversity and the eclecticism continue to mark the character of Buddhism during the period of the foundation of the classical South-East Asian monarchical states, homogeneity of forms, and institutional orthodoxy began to emerge during this period. Throughout the long history of the development of Buddhism various cultural aspects and features have been displayed; it is very difficult to summarize systematically in a simple way, such cultural richness is solely due to the fundamental attitude of the accumulation of the Buddhist religion eventually and finally it will pave the way to world peace and co-existential beatitude of mankind.

Thank you.

MUSEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF THE BENGAL-ASIA LINKAGE

A MICRO STUDY

Supreo Chanda

Department of Museology, University of Calcutta

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I pay my respect to the Chairperson, Professor Sen. I thank Professor Lipi Ghosh and Dr. Madhurima Chaudhuri for inviting me. I wish I were so eloquent and scholastic in my speaking abilities like the previous speakers. In fact, I wouldn't have dared to come in this gathering had I not been forced by Lipi di.

Though in the title I have mentioned about the Bengal-Asia linkage, I would say that I have concentrated in South-East Asia only, because you see, the linkage to the Bengal and Asia is the well-perceptible notion but really has not been explored so far in the musicological perspective to visually interpret in the museums and other institutions.

The cultural trait of Asia, especially South-East Asia offers evidence of thousand years' connection with India. We can find influence of classical language of India on South-East Asian languages and scripts. Similarly, the theory of kingship, traditional dance and puppetry, and place names, customs and traditions reflect Indian influence. Bengal played a chief role in this due to its geographic location and its connection with several major trade routes. Despite of the cultural and historical link between Bengal and South-East Asian countries through various disciplines musicological interpretation has a long road ahead.

Influence of Indian culture on Southeast Asia countries can be traced back to around 300 BC until around the 15th Century. During this time south east coast of the Indian Subcontinent had established trade, cultural and political relations with Southeast Asian kingdoms in Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, Malay Peninsula, Cambodia and Vietnam and during this time it is suspected that the Hindu-Buddhist influence was absorbed by local politics. The Pallava kingdom of the southeastern coast of the peninsula did not have culture restrictions on crossing the sea, Unlike the Hindu kingdoms within the Indian sub-continent, which facilitate the exchanges of cultural concept through the sea routes into South-East Asia. Here Buddhism acted as a catalyst introducing Indian culture to different parts of Asia. Being the land of spices and semi-precious stones made Indian entrepreneurs enter South-East Asia to create trade opportunity. Consistently, this leads to closer interaction between the settlers and the original inhabitants.

Sometime between 2500 and 1500 BC, the peoples of maritime Southeast Asia present day Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, are supposed to have migrated southwards from southern China, where they established small settlements in the Malay Peninsula as it was connected with maritime centres on the east coast of India back then. This connection allowed the Indian cultural influence slowly and gradually penetrates into the local life style especially in present-day Thailand, Cambodia and Java. Chinese records confirm the Indian activities in Funan or the Mekong delta as the first province of influence. Evidence suggested the ships sailing from Tamralipta and Armaravati to Myanmar or Burma, Martabam and Indonesia and ships from the South Indian ports were directed towards Tennaserim, Trang, the straits of Malacca and Java. The western parts of India also contributed in the promotion of trade and commerce. Connection from southern India has been dominating influence in Southeast Asia until about 1500 CE. For many centuries Hinduism and Buddhism, spread to these states from India eventually Buddhism became the main religion of the mainland. Many Scholars refer to this entire phenomenon as “Indianisation”. Buddhist religions and Brahmanism, religious texts in Sanskrit, art, mythology of the Puranas, and the observance of the Dharma sastras and temple architecture got connected to Hindu-Buddhist culture and beliefs in Asia. Bengal played a central role in this process of Indianisation due to its geographical position and its association with several major trade routes starting from early Christian times. The monsoonal trade wind played a significant role in migration, trade and transport.

From geographical position Bengal, being in a transition zone between South-west and South-East Asia, has lot of common traits with South-East Asia such we find commonality in staple diet. Rice and fish is the common staple diet, besides chewing of betel-nut and betel-leaves common, the lungi (sarong) is the main dress for men, and there are similarities in the use of many tropical articles, such as bamboo.

In the context of the museum, the connection between Bengal and Asia the museum exhibits become relevant as they serve emotional connection with the people. Although this said area requires in-depth study to establish proper understanding on this distinctive notion. While walking down the various alleys of the museums in search of musicological connection between Bengal and Asia, we find many of the artifacts from different countries of Asia and south East Asia in some of the Museums of India. But most of the cases the display seems to be of scattered nature. We rarely found organized galleries dedicated to this particular theme. National Museum, New Delhi, Salar Jung Museum of Hyderabad has dedicated galleries for collections that are from countries like China, Japan, Burma, Korea, Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia and from Middle East countries like Egypt, Syria, Persia and Arabia. Very few

museums in Bengal, properly display objects related to this theme. In Bengal, the largest collection of the Asian artifacts can be found in Indian Museum Kolkata. Beside this, Gurus day Museum of Bengal Folk Art, Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, University of Calcutta and Akshay Kumar Maitreya Museum & Heritage Centre, North Bengal University also holds few of the artifacts from the Asian countries. Here we find prominent focus on representation of the dominant areas like China, Japan. Representation from central and West Asia are more prominent in the museum galleries than others. Cultural representations from countries like Laos, Vietnam, Philippines, Vientiane, etc. are hard to be found. The objects that are displayed from Bangladesh, Pakistan are mostly belongs to pre 1947 period.

The Archaeological gallery of Indian Museum includes displays of some Southeast Asian sculptures of Buddhist and Brahmanical origins that were recovered from Indonesia Myanmar, Cambodia and Burma along with other displays that are dedicated to show the sculptural evolution in India. Beside the Archaeological gallery, the decorative arts section in the gallery holds some of the aesthetic creations of craftsmen from the Asian countries which include China, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Iconic sandstone artifact from Java and Angkor Wat exhibited in the archaeological section of the Indian Museum portrays a significant connection. The stone image of Ganesha from Java, wearing a dhoti with Indian motifs, is a proof of a once-thriving textile trade between Java or Indonesia and India. Similarly the Buddha's relics along with the Hindu icons of Shiva, Brahma, Mahisasuramardini, etc. are displayed from Southeast Asian counties in this gallery. The Buddhagupta inscription from the Malayan Peninsula (present day Singapore), provides evidence connection between South-East Asian land with Bengal. Another significant display is the stone sculpture Garuda, the eagle-like bird which is the mount of Vishnu in the gallery.

The decorative arts & textile section of the museum holds some of the aesthetic creations of craftsmen. This section of the gallery includes objects made of wood, bone, brass, bronze, copper-ware, and silver, ivory, jade, bidri, and damascene from all around the Asian and South-East Asian countries. This section also showcases objects of Royal Glazed Earthenware, enormous front portion of a Salin monastery and temple frontage of Mandalay showing Burmese art.

The Gandhara gallery on the other hand provides platform for various sculptures that comprehend the story of life of Lord Buddha along with his images. The gallery also showcases Boddhisattva and Maitreya of the Gandhara School of Art which flourished in the

2nd Century CE, which were excavated from places like Mardan and Loriyan Tangai in the Pakistan region.

South-East Asian artifacts in the Indian Museum collection – Archaeological Gallery

BUDDHA

Sand Stone, 10th / 12th Century

Java





TARA

Sand Stone, 9th / 10th Century

Java

PRAJNAPRAMITA

Sand Stone, 10th Century

Java



CHATURMUKHA LINGA

Sand Stone, 7th / 8th Century

Java



GANESHA

8th / 9th Century, Java

BRAHMA

Sand Stone, 10th Century

Java



SHIVA

8th Century, Java

MAHISASURAMARDINI

Sand Stone, 9th Century, Java



GARUDA

The mount of Vishnu

*Sand Stone, 12th Century,
Cambodia*



*South-East Asian artefacts in the Indian Museum collection – Decorative Art Section and
Mask Gallery*



INDRA

Indra seated on his mount Airavata

Wood, 18th Century, Nepal

RADHA – KRISHNA & GOPIS

Radha Krishna with Gopis Beneath Kadamba Tree

Silver & Semiprecious Stone, 19th Century

Nepal



SHIVA

Four armed lord Shiva standing in Tribhanga posture

Bronze, 10th / 11th Century , Nepal

THROBAP

Folk people of Bhutan use this mask.

Wood and Silk - Thimpu, Bhutan

Mask Gallery



ATSARABAP

Folk people of Bhutan use this mask

Wood and Silk - Thimpu, Bhutan

Mask Gallery

DANCER

A dancing man

Ivory, 19th Century, Myanmar



SALVER

Salver shows royal hunting

Silver, 19th Century, Myanmar



FOOD BOX

Gold-lacquered Wood, 19th Century, Myanmar

LAMA & BUDDHA

Painted Wood, 19th Century, Myanmar





DANCING NATA

Wood, 1903 CE, Rangoon, Myanmar



- ***BUDDHIST SHRINE: Wood set with colored glasses 1895-1900CE, Myanmar***
- ***REPLICA OF SALIN MONASTRY GATEWAY: Wood: 1895-1900CE: Mandalay, Myanmar***

***BOX DEPICTING A SCENE FROM
JATAKA STORY***

*Material: Wood Lacquered
with golden color.*

Time period: 19th Century CE

Place: Rangoon, Myanmar



THINGAN-OAT - A ROUND BOX

*Material: Wood Lacquered
with golden color.*

Time period: 19th Century CE

Place: Pagan, Myanmar

Similarly many artifacts and cultural object of Indian origin are displayed in various museums throughout the South-East Asia, many monuments and historical sites of Indian civilisation and cultural practices have become a part of National culture. Below are some examples of cultural display in Vietnam Museums.



Navagrahaat the Museum of History, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Garuda at the Museum of History, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Lakshmi at the Museum of History, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Betel leaf and areca seeds are indispensable in important ceremonies and show the behaviour culture of the Vietnam, exhibit at the Museum of the Ho Chi Minh City



Serving betel nut as ritualistic offerings are part important Vietnamese traditional ceremonies, such as engagements and weddings, funerals and burials, exhibit at the Museum of the Ho Chi Minh City



Guoc Moc: Vietnamese traditional footwear, exhibit at the Museum of the Ho Chi Minh City



Ethnographic exhibits at the Museum of History, HCM



Vietnamese Masks use in Vietnamese version of Ramayana



Vietnamese Masks use in Vietnamese version of Ramayana

There is a strong cultural link between Bengal and the Southeast Asian Countries in archaeological, ethnographical, linguistic and literary sources. The myriad cultures encompassed in rituals, culinary practices, belief, moral & value systems are pronounced in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan. Linkages between Bengal and Asia appear widely in popular folk drama, tales and art all over Southeast Asia. There are many consistency found in day to day life and social rituals that intrigue us to raise curiosity when it comes to interpret the linkage between the sources. For example the Vietnamese wedding ritual includes betel-nut and betel-leaf, *Kharam* (wooden sandals) is a part of the traditional costume of the groom, commonality in dialect and its execution points towards cultural exchange between Bengal and ASEAN countries. Though it is difficult to be confidently confirm that these traits are originated from Bengal. This will require extensive research work to confirm this notion. Further the musicological interpretation is far from what should be sufficient. To achieve this Cultural exchange programmes must be executed at the ministry level to encourage, strengthen and promote cultural, cooperation through activities such as exchange of visit, performing arts, art exhibitions, training, co-publications, publishing materials, archives, join exhibitions as well as cooperation in the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage that involved museum, archaeology and art galleries, archives and libraries. Some of the programmes that directly relate to museum institutions that can encourage more compact musicological interpretation of said link –

- Collaboration in exchanging visit between archaeological institutions, museums and archives establishment of the countries.
- Museums can significantly host temporarily exchange exhibitions, but it in way places of countries which can be developed into a travelling exhibition in each and every countries.
- Implement collection exchange programmes or loan of artifacts to enable citizens of every country to not only appreciate historical and cultural artifacts but also understand respective socio-politics histories and cultures that bind them.
- Collaborate in joint publication project and exchange publication relating to heritage, librarianship, archaeology and musicology, archives and history of arts.
- Collaboration in joint exhibition projects relating to heritage, musicology, archives and libraries. Along with organized joint research and publication programs or publication exchanges on musicology.

It is high time to plan, execute and strengthen museum programmes through exhibitions, collection exchanges, artifacts conservation, training and research.

Thank you.

FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURY PANDUA (GOUR): ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN AND ITS TECHNIQUE - ASIAN CONNECT

Sutapa Sinha and Swati Biswas

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On behalf of the department of the Islamic History and Culture, I Swati Biswas, and Professor Sutapa Sinha, we thank the organizers for bringing us this opportunity to present our paper titled Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century Pandua and Gaur Architecture: Design, Technique and its Asian Connect. The paper is part of our joint research that we are still continuing to do. In this research we're just not trying to document but we're also taking a kind of comparative study of the designs and we're also looking into the techniques or the materials found till date that's used in the architectural framework. So, to start the paper we have to understand that Pandua and Gaur served as the capital of Sultanate Bengal, back to back 1345 to 1576.



Fig 1: Twin capital cities Gaur and Pandua

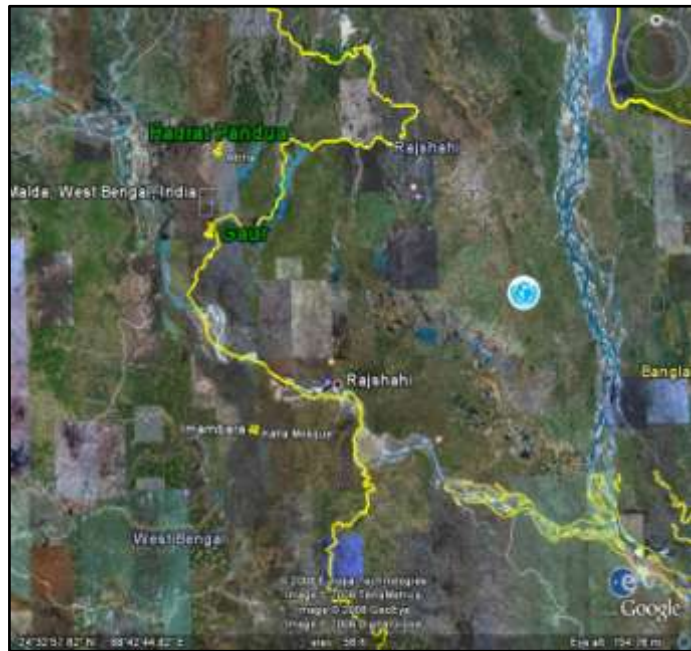


Fig 2: International Border

The period signifies a time when the Delhi Sultanate was fighting tooth and nail to construct its identity as an independent empire in Delhi and then establishing itself as a powerful empire in South Asia to reckon with. This is the basic difference, therefore, with the other regional Sultanate of India, with Bengal. The other regional Sultanate developed after the decline of the Delhi Sultanate. Bengal on the other hand was contemporary to Delhi Sultanate. Bengal's regional medieval identity thus developed as a form of cultural ethos from the advent of these Muslim rulers who tried to distinguish themselves from their Delhi counterpart. This regional identity was manifested in its architecture from its earlier monuments.

The Islamic rulers of west with their central and west Asian taste blended the aesthetics of indigenous architecture. The technique and design of these monuments thus connected the regions of Bengal to their Asian counter parts and Bengal truly came within the manifold of a Pan-Asian Islamicate culture. We will discuss this aspect of Pan-Asian Islamicate culture and Bengal through a few important monuments built during this period. We're considering Adina mosque and Eklakhi mausoleum in Pandua built in between 1375 and 1432, the Chika Mausoleum, Chamkatti Mosque, Tantipara Mosque and Lottan Mosque in Gaur which was built roughly between 1460 to 1490. So we'll start with one of the earliest mosques of this period that is Adina mosque, in Pandua.



Fig 3: Adina mosque, Pandua

Adina mosque, located in Hazrat Pandua or Firuzabad, is the only hypostyle courtyard mosque in Bengal (presently 12 miles north of Malda town). Its structural appearance proclaimed the patron's final ambitious venture of overthrowing of Delhi's overlord-ship. A congregational mosque was built as suggested from the inscription affixed dated 1374 - 1375 CE constructed by Sultan Sikandar bin Ilyas Shah.



Fig 4: Panoramic view of the Adina Mosque

It has a prayer chamber on the west, and surrounded by a covered cloisters in the north, east and south. The prayer chamber is divided into two symmetrical wings, by a central bay covered by a pointed barrel vault, which has now collapsed. The original central bay's east facade possibly resembled the central *pistaq* of the Dakhil Darwaza, another barrel vaulted brick structure situated in Gaur. This barrel vaulted structure is unique in Bengal, and in few instances the Tughluqs of Delhi used it. The domes are more prevalent in South Asia and used extensively throughout the medieval period.



Fig 5: Central nave once covered with a barrel vault, Adina Mosque.



Fig 6: Dakhil Darwaza, Gaur

The barrel vault of Adina gave exposure to the fascinating central *mihrab* area. In the centre thus are the impressive *mihrab* and an exclusive *mimbar*. The qibla-wall is faced with black basalt to three-quarter of its height and the rest of it is in brick. The main hall or the prayer chambers of side wings are made of recessed niches with colonettes of black basalt and above those are arch-shaped brick panels with exquisite floral and geometric designs. The interesting part of this mosque is the north wing. The area covered five bays abutting the *qibla* wall. These walls comprised of the basalt *Mihrab* which are beautifully curved.



Fig 7: Central prayer hall with a fascinating *mihrab* and exquisite *mimbar*



Fig 8: Exquisite *Mimbar* in detail

There are two doors situated at the levels on the *takht* in the northern wing, this disputed *takht* had a central and west Asian counterpart but is definitely a new feature in South Asia. In the 15th - 16th Century this feature became much popular in Bengal and the purpose was definitely an extra protection for the ruler and royalty. It was also a symbol of exclusivity of the royalty. The aspect was definitely borrowed from west Asia.

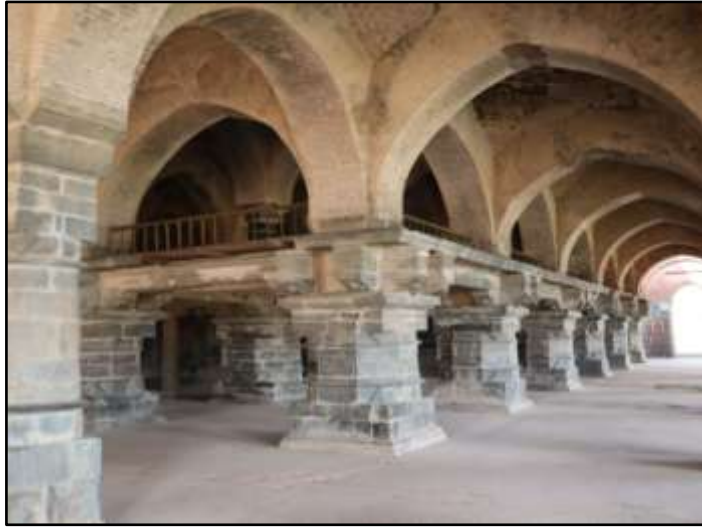


Fig 9: The Ladies Gallery on the First floor at the north western corner of Adina mosque.



Fig 10: Interior of the mosque

The exterior of the mosque in contrast to its *qibla* wall is somewhat ascetic. The east façade is brick-built and consists of 41 small trabeated entrances over-headed by arch shaped window and more Tughlaqi in style and reminding once again of their Central Asian counterpart. This feature is followed in the north and south façade too. The only difference is the black basalt plinth.



Fig 11: Outside of the Qibla wall on west, Adina Mosque

Now let us move on to the other monuments in Pandua. That is the Eklakhi mausoleum of 15th Century. This fascinating square single-domed tomb is the mausoleum of Sultan Jalal-ud-din Shah, son of Raja Ganesh. It is in close proximity of the tomb of Sufi saint Nur-Qutb ul-Alam, who was Sultan's spiritual leader. This is the first square planned brick built mausoleum covered with a single dome. This structure embraces the gently sloped curved-corniced roof, an atypical feature of Bengal monuments. This feature later moved to North India in the hands of the Mughals and beyond because of its aesthetic attraction.



Fig 12: Ekhlakhi tomb or mausoleum, Pandua

This sleek structure has an octagonal interior chamber covered by single ribbed dome supported by eight squinches. This again rises above the stone pillars embedded in the imposing brick wall.

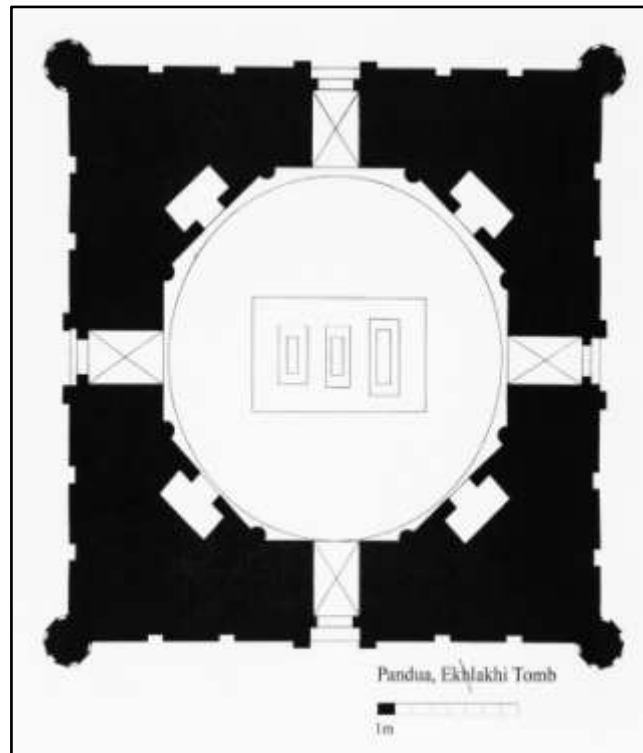


Fig 13: Ground Plan of the Eklakhi Tomb



Fig 14: Interior of the Tomb

The outside of the walls are exquisitely embellished with terracotta floral and geometric patterns. These patterns were later featured in Gaur in its glazed form. The gradual progression from terracotta design as seen in Eklakhi to its glazed form is indeed a technological borrowing process from Central Asia, and a marked feature of this time as seen in Gaur. The aesthetic build of the designs though have a regional flavour. Therefore, medieval artistic design of this embellishment had a broader Asian context and signifies the pan-Asian composite culture of the medieval period, much manifested in the next capital of the Bengal Sultans that is Gaur.



Fig 15: Exterior Terracotta ornamentation, Eklakhi Tomb, Pandua

Moving onto the buildings of Gaur, we start with a very interesting monument, that's Chika mausoleum. The purpose of this interesting structure remains disputed, but for us, we consider this as a mausoleum of later Ilyas Shahi period established by Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah in and around 1450.



Fig 16: Chika Mausoleum, Gaur

More like the Eklakhi tomb of Pandua, the structure has long open multi-aisled cloisters at back of the west side. This structure is an extension of a technique where the dome is placed on an octagonal base raised above the lintel level of the building leaving a floor inside as a square one. This very feature of square-in-octagon plan is also found in the Eklakhi mausoleum.



Fig 17: Glazed bricks used in the construction



Fig 18: Chamkati Mosque, Gaur

The next important monument is the Chamkati mosque. The Chamkati mosque has a small square single-domed prayer chamber entered through a neat portico on the East which was earlier covered by the small domes. The impression was thus rectangular with *Chala* pattern which became very popular during the Mughal period and was incorporated into many architectural complexes later in South Asia as referred earlier.

The decoration of the mosque was done in glazed tiles and terracotta relief. The use of glazed tiles was the marked feature of this period. The technique again had its counterpart in Central Asia and West Asia though the medium was different in some cases.



Fig 19: Tantipara Mosque, Gaur

Next monument in discussion is the Tantipara mosque, which is about a kilometer from *Kotwali Darwaja* within the walled city of Gaur. The rectangular mosque has five entrance arches on its east façade, correspondingly stands the *mihirabs* on the *qibla* wall. This structure like the Adina mosque of Pandua has a *takht* at the North West corner of the *qibla* wall.

The interior is divided into two aisles by four part black basalt pillars, which results in eight bays. There are two bays within the *takht* in the same wall. Each bay again was covered by a dome, now in ruins. Keeping the Bengal's architectural idiom, the roof's cornice is gently sloped. The exterior corner is marked by an octagonal turret, now a common feature in medieval and late medieval Bengal's architecture. The delicate terracotta relief work transcends the structure to one of the most exquisite buildings of this period.



Fig 20: Like Adina, provision of ladies' gallery / royal takht in the north-west corner of the mosque



Fig 21: Terracotta decoration on outer wall of Façade, Tantipara mosque, Gaur

Moving onto the last monument in discussion is the Lottan mosque. This is the best example of a covered rectangular in plan mosque with a single-dome square prayer chamber. This prayer chamber is entered through a covered porch that like the Chamkatti mosque pierced through three open arches. The mosque has one arched openings each on north and south. There are three openings in the east façade. There is an atypical *char chala* vault flanked on the either sides by a small dome which covers the central bay of the entrance porch.



Fig 22: A general view of the Lottan mosque, Gaur

The single dome over the square prayer chamber rests on the octagon inside formed by the brick pendentives supported on the four corners by deep squinches. Lottan mosque was popular for its rich multi-chromed glazed tile embellishment. Glazed tiles were also used in the prayer chamber - huge single dome, pendentives, squinches, mihrabs, alcoves, walls and floors along with its entrance porch on east. The brick exterior of this mosque was also thoroughly covered with glazed tiles upto its drum base.



Fig 23: Façade of the Lottan Mosque, Gaur



Fig. 24: Extensive use of glazed tiles in the interior of prayer chamber, Lottan Mosque



Fig 25: Jam Minar in Afghanistan

The monuments discussed are an apt tool to conclude the fact that the region of Bengal became a part of the Islamicate culture of Asia during the medieval period. This culture was

flexible enough to incorporate the regional components as remote as that of Bengal. In turn the cultural ethos of Bengal also incorporated the Islamicate culture of Asia during the period through its technique, designs, and aesthetics. The best examples to reiterate this fact are the glazed tiles and bricks used profusely in the monuments of Gaur till late as 16th Century. The technique of glazing the tiles travelled all the way from Central and West Asia with the new rulers and was used for the designs essentially indigenous of the region of Bengal reveals that fact that the rulers not only accepted the indigenous taste but also appreciated it to the extent that it could be incorporated for the buildings which were built to express their political authority and used by them and their successors which ultimately made a strong imprint on the medieval heritage in Bengal.

Thanks

GROWTH OF AND CHALLENGES BEFORE MYSTICAL ISLAM IN BENGAL AND INDONESIA FROM 16TH TO 20TH CENTURIES

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Supriya Law, Former M. Phil Student, Department of History, University of Calcutta

Good afternoon everyone. Respected Chairperson, I am Supriya Law and the title of our paper which I seek to present today is “Growth of and Challenges before Mystical Islam in Bengal and Indonesia from the sixteenth to the twentieth century.” This paper is co-authored with Professor Amit Dey, Department of History, Calcutta University who unfortunately could not be present today due to pressing commitments. I will take this opportunity to thank Professor Lipi Ghosh for organizing such an enlightening seminar.

We will endeavor to talk of Islam, keeping in mind two trajectories - one of Richard Eaton in his ‘The rise of Islam and the Bengal frontier’ where we use Islam as an eco-geographic factor and the view of Clifford Geertz in his ‘Islam Observed, Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia’, where he opines that orthodox Islam denies Sufism, that hegemonic orthodoxy does not give credit to Sufism and Sufism is viewed as a corrupting influence on Islam. These two trajectories - one of geographic location and the other of the inter-relation between hegemonic orthodoxy and mystical Islam is the core of our discussion.

Samuel Phillips Huntington in his ‘The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order’ talks of the clash between Christianity and Islam - between the Occident and the Orient. But what we see here is a challenge or clash within civilizations, a clash within Islam. Islam cannot be viewed as a monolithic whole. It is advisable to speak of Islam in the plural - Islams, Islam with an ‘s’.

In this narrative of Islam, Bengal and South-East Asia is of great relevance, because with the spread of Sufism in Bengal and Indonesia, local cultures and folk traditions played a major role in the identity formation of these Muslims, and also due to the fact that in the nineteenth and especially in the twentieth century mystical Islam is challenged by orthodoxy and this is now a global phenomenon. Mystical Islam is facing challenges everywhere. The attack on a mosque in Cairo this February, with Sufi inclination, is an example of Islam fighting a clash within civilizations. History is a communication between the past and present, which helps us to contemplate the future. And what we observe is how the Arab world believed in one country, one language, one script - an urban phenomenon - scripture oriented

with no room for imagination. Bengal and Indonesia embraced Islam, but retained their language and their script.

Let us now look at the widely accepted notion of Islam, Gustave Edmund von Grunebaum in his 'Modern Islam: the Search for Culture and Identity' views Islam basically as an urban religion, which revolves around the masjid, the bazaar and the kasba. This concept is partly true for the Middle-East. For instance, Baghdad in Iraq or Nishapur, Ispahan in Iran. But, we seek to challenge this stereotype. Islam can flourish with all its vitality in a rural setting and thus we choose Bengal and Indonesia of the sixteenth to the twentieth century.

Existing stereotypes on Islam views Islam as classical Islam, Islam that is incomplete without the Middle-East, beyond urban centres. But we look at South-east Asia, at Indonesia and the cultural diversity that is Bengal.

We shall strive to confirm that Islam can flourish with all its vitality thousands of kilometers away from the Middle-East in a rural setting, Arabic culture in a non-Arabic zone, but with local and regional identities pre-dominant, what we will term as folk Islam. As we discussed earlier, Islam is not a monolithic term, it is much more practical, if we talk about Islam in the plural, because Islam accommodates diverse characteristics, local customs, an antithesis almost to scriptural Islam, a user friendly Islam, where morality is more important than print. Gutenberg made the Bible and Koran accessible to a wider audience, but that audience has to be literate. But oral transmission is aided by music, poetry, dance, symbols, the folk dimension that plays a role in the spread of Islam. The Prophet himself was illiterate, Lalan Shah was illiterate, and so also was Abdullah Seth. Here the 'dil' Quran is more important than the printed Quran this poses a challenge to the cultural hierarchy, a challenge to the hegemonic orthodoxy of the ulama by local identity formations by the Sufis. Gender roles also undergo a transformation in the wet rice cultivation of Indonesia and Bengal. Segregation is economically unviable as labour is required in the agricultural activity involved. In denser forested regions the challenging agricultural fields, the looming danger of the cobras simply made the attire for the semi-arid regions unviable. The mosque is the symbol of hegemonic authority and is thus masculine. The Sufi shrine by contrast is more feminine, where women and children are allowed entry up to a point.

Ranajit Guha opined that religion is the archives of the people. Nowhere else is this more pertinent than in South-east Asia in two colonized countries both sustaining on wet rice cultivation, both agrarian, both geographically far away from the Middle-East and both sustaining mystical tradition, which is increasingly facing challenge.

Let us now focus on our two case-studies, Bengal and Indonesia, both have some unique similarities. Both in Indonesia and Bengal, by which I refer to undivided Bengal, they are the only Muslims in the world who in spite of being thoroughly Islamized, have retained both their language and script.

Both Indonesia and Bengal have retained their languages, Bengali in case of Bengal and Bahasa Indonesia in case of Indonesia. But while Bengal has retained their script, Indonesia has accommodated the Latin-Malay alphabet.

Both are agrarian Muslim communities - in Bengal they are converts from Hinduism, and in Indonesia they are converts from Hinduism and Buddhism. In fact Bengal and Indonesia are the two largest Muslim agrarian communities in the world. Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population of 205 million Muslims, 88% of the population being Muslim, while India has the world's third largest Muslim population of 177 million Muslims, 13% of its population is Muslim, while Bangladesh has the world's fourth largest Muslim population of 149 million Muslims, and 89% of its population is Muslim.

Both Indonesia and Bengal have embraced the mystical element, the importance of vernacular, local symbols and identity formation. Islam is not homogenized, but heterogeneized, a cosmopolitan synthetic tradition.

Unlike what we see in Northern Africa, let us take a look at Morocco, where complete process of urbanization has taken place, complete homogenization, which is not merely linguistic. There is a proclivity to homogenize and that has been totally resisted in the wet rice cultivation regions of Bengal and Indonesia. Local eco-geographic factors have played a role here. The scriptures, the Hadis, the Quran dominate Morocco, but in Bengal and in Indonesia, the rural countryside is different from Morocco. Here we can study the work of imaginaire Muslims.

One cannot change the Quran or the Hadis, but can expand the imagination of the poet, the painter and appropriate and localize the universal symbols of Islam. This helps in local identity formation. Thus in riverine Bengal, the Prophet becomes the 'Sujan Majhi', the saviour in the troubled seas of life. Provincial symbols of Islam do not dissolve and local symbols of Islam are celebrated and recognized. Even universal symbols co-exist with the local symbols. Thus in a 'jari' song we find Hassan, Hussain, Fatima and Ganga all invitees to a celebration. While in Indonesia there is a unique cultural dimension in the mosques. The beating of drums is conducted to call the faithful to prayer in evening with the local tradition, in spite of the fact that music is 'haraam' or forbidden in Islam, an example of appropriation

and recognition of local traditions. While the official airlines of Indonesia, Garuda Airlines is named after, and also uses the Hindu symbol of Garuda, the vahana of Vishnu, and Ramayana, Mahabharat continue to be the themes of the Javanese Wayans puppet show and the Kecak dance of Bali.

Here we have to go beyond the confines of being a historian and take a multi-disciplinary approach and become an anthropologist to understand the complexities of identity formation. While an anthropologist depends on field work for a better understanding, a historian is confined to the library and archives. We have to go beyond archives, beyond elite sources and capture the aspiration of the subalterns to chronicle everyday instances, worldview of the local people, their views on religion and spirituality. Move beyond the elite sources emancipate history from the library, use subaltern sources, go beyond written records and explore. History speaks in many voices, we just have to listen.

Another similarity between Indonesia and Bengal was in terms of political hegemony, where colonial hegemony existed. In case of religion, there was no orthodox hegemony, no religious fundamentalism to homogenize.

In case of both Bengal and Indonesia, both under colonial hegemony, Sufism played the role of what is termed by Clifford Geertz as a 'theatre state', a theatrical representation of the state, where authority was sustained from the declining state to the Sufi shrines, Symbols, idioms and authority transported India first from the declining Mughal state to the successive states and then onto the Sufi shrines. This became centres for justice, source of authority for the peasantry. Patrons of arts like music are refuge for eunuchs and other marginalized elements of society. Even women found a place for themselves in the Sufi shrines. Not only was urs the major festival at the shrines, in the colonial environment the absence of state patronage made the Sufi shrines take on different notes. With the fall of oriental empires and the British and the Dutch in seeks of power, people sought peace, solace and self-confidence in the kingdom of God. Sufi-saints took the place of the material kingdom and provided spiritual inspiration. Sufi shrines thus symbolically replaced the state.

Claude Levi-Strauss has emphasized the need to analyze symbols. In the Sufi shrines we find several important aspect of the state, like the patronage of music, the maintenance of hierarchy of relationship between the pir and his murid, the ritual of nazrana to the pir. Richard Maxwell Eaton in his Sufis of Bijapur shows how the Sufis resembled the Sultan. He highlighted how the Sufis sat on a gaddi and was transferred in a palanquin and a hierarchy was maintained in the Sufi shrines according to status just like in court and how ashraf status mattered even in spiritual succession.

Bengal and Indonesia cannot be considered as periphery of Islam with the largest agrarian base it is the example of how de-ashrafization has worked its wonders, where the local languages and scripts have survived, so has local tradition, customs and attires. The religion of Islam has been accepted but with equal dignity and self-respect for local characteristic features which are recognized and celebrated. No homogenizing process has taken over. Rice is the best example of a local agricultural being recognized and legitimized by Dad Ali who sees the rice as a lover of prophet. The farmer's love for rice is a reflection of his love for the Prophet and there is no greater level of love than the love for the Prophet. It makes all Muslims equal - all are the lovers of the Prophet.

Thank you.

BENGAL AND THE HIMALAYAS - CONNECTIONS AND DISRUPTIONS

EARLIEST TO COLONIAL PERIOD

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Thank you so much, Chair. A very good afternoon to everyone. At the outset, let me thank Professor Sen and as well as the organizers of today's wonderful seminar, specially Professor Lipi Ghosh, as well as Madhurima and the entire team for putting up this wonderful thing for all of us. At the outset let me stress that this paper is still work in progress. Because much of the bulk of this presentation and this paper came about historical studies in Buddhism, especially in Tantrayana, much of it has already been mentioned by other eminent scholars before me, which traces much of its roots to Bengal. I would like to seek more guidance from the eminent historians who are present here, who are experts in the history of Bengal, because I am not. Before delving into the paper, let us start from the present, because the title of my paper is as everyone can see, and has already read it, it is 'Bengal and the Himalayas- Connections and Disruptions', so I'll start from the present. And with regard to this what I'll do is I'll emphasize on the idea of the Himalayas, as herein mostly Tibet, as well as in the context of the Eastern Himalayas, which includes Darjeeling. Now, while there might be confusion with regard to me invoking the idea of Darjeeling over here because Darjeeling is, of course it certainly is a part of Bengal. But it is a fuzzy zone, with a number of sovereignties at various times exercising some degree of control over the region. Part of the region at several times was under the loose control of Coochbehar, Bhutan, Nepal, as well as Sikkim. Darjeeling as a part of Bengal comes about with rise of colonial enterprise launched by the British when the region turned into an important sanatorium for the British and the Indian elites. For example, the great poet Rabindranath Tagore used to turn to his adventures to the hills as an important mode of generating inspiration for his creativity. We also have erstwhile landlord of Bhowal, now in Bangladesh, who for his treatment in 1909, had gone to Darjeeling where he died and was cremated. His life and death and the subsequent events that occurred has been brilliantly captured by Professor Partha Chatterjee in his book 'A Princely Impostor? The Kumar of Bhawal and the Secret History of Indian Nationalism'. An important medium through which the connection is built between the Himalayas and Bengal is through human imagination, where Himalayas have always invoked the ideas of peace, the sacred and spirituality, once which attracted spiritual wanderers from the plains of Bengal and other places. This imagination during the colonial times for the Himalayas transformed, there was a

change and brought about what we call as the touristic gaze and that imagined regions formed through geo-strategic lenses, and through commercial avenues. Significantly much of these imaginations of the Himalayas are seemed to have emanated from Bengal, whether from the indigenous elites, or from the British who had a strong foothold in Bengal in the form of the East India Company. However it needs to be much understood and emphasized that these imaginations which subsequently numerous connections seem to be overlapping, and also in many instances involved the earlier forms of contact that was present in the region. The earlier connections seemed to be on a more micro-level, on a level of the community, ones that stressed on cultural and material linkages that got transformed and eventually focused on the macro level, as much of it was directed by the state. At present it is a state level connection, which I see as disruptions that mostly marks the relationship between Bengal and the Himalayas. While connections based on a more materialist consumerist ideas seem to be dominant in the current period with the Himalayas strongly turned into a tourist spot, which is the dominant narrative about the connections between Bengal and the region. At present the first contact of the Himalayas for Bengal as well as its people is in the form of a hill station, a tourist spot which is meant to be consumed for adventures. While this does contribute to the local economy of the hills providing a livelihood to the local population, it has transformed into the ruling discourse, a ruling narrative which traps the space, the communities and the interactions that it used to have earlier with Bengal. Here the idea of the discourse becomes important which I have liberally borrowed from Michel Foucault's ideas about discourses of obscuring or hiding of other narratives, thus making discourses highly violent and repressive. The modern day discourses of the Himalayas are seen to be leaning towards a degree of exoticism and other forms of stereotyping. This leads to a degree of alienation that is based on a level of dehumanization which it seems to be now present and prevalent in the connections between Bengal and the Himalayas. However historically we need to emphasize that a degree of [05:38] between Bengal and the hills has always been there with the form of that is the plains seen as the source of civilization and rationality while the hills have been much associated with a degree of backwardness and primitive culture. Still the past ties between both spaces can be understood from a rather secretive [05:56 - ?] perspective, as we better understood through a few instances on which I have been delving for. However again I want to stress over here that only imploring on these historical examples provided by me have not been deeply researched by me or to an immense understanding of the period to which they belong. I'm not sure that in the audience among the present, there are many historians over here, they would be exposed or come across these individuals and the ideas they propagated. Even though as mentioned we do see the presence of a degree of home-grown orientalism in

the connection between Bengal and the Himalayan species, it was not needed with a strong degree of power and domination, notions that comes with the dawning of the nation-state. It is then that we see many disruptions between Himalayan region and Bengal. And though the form of connections that were much prevalent, between these spaces was of lines and religions, specially in the form of Buddhism. Buddhism, specially under the Palas in Bengal, was given a boost from the middle of the 8th century to the close of the 12th century, with the Palas subscribing to with the Tantrayana school of Buddhism, with an emphasis on, of course, tantric systems. The Tibetan tradition seemed to be admiring the rule of Gopala for the establishment of the Odantapura Mahavihar. Much of the Pala rulers boosted Buddhist literature during this period. We also see Buddhism take a more constructive turn towards Tantricism and Tantric Buddhism. Tantric gods and goddesses were embraced by Buddhism. It was under the Pala dynasty that a direct cultural link was formed between Bengal and Tibet as well as South-east Asia. Now parts of the Himalayan space were imbued with the ideas of Tantric Buddhism, which became the linkage between the two spaces. The cultural exchanges of pundits and scholars between Bengal and Tibet were seemed to be taking place that lead to the emergence of the new form of Buddhism, which was completely different in the earlier period, as now we see the emergence of the structures of mysticism, which is known as the Vajrayana or the Tantrayana. Even the most famous Kalacakrayana was introduced into Bengal in the Pala period. Incidentally the Kalacakra initiation was one of the most important religious rituals in the modern period for a Tibetan Buddhist. One that is bestowed by the Dalai Lama, the current Dalai Lama several times in Bodhgaya, in Gangtok, in Amravati and also in Salugara which is in North Bengal. Currently the Kalacakra is synonymous with the Tibetan spiritual leader, and is a major religious occasion drawing tens of thousands devotees globally. The transference of Tantric deities from Bengal belonging to the Hindu and Tantric system becomes an important mode of communication between the two spaces. An important deity who seems to be connecting Bengal to Tibet and to the larger Himalayan region is the goddess Tara who is known as Jetsun Dölma in Tibet. She is considered to be the central goddess in the Tibetan pantheon, a figure of deep reverence, she is deemed as the mother of compassion, thus the mother of all the Buddhas. The cult of Tara is traditionally associated with a very famous Bengali Atisha Dipankara, who brought Tara to Tibet, an important figure for Tibetan Buddhism, and a native of modern day Chittagong in Bangladesh. He is credited with bringing a reformist streak in Tibetan Buddhism and establishment of what we call as the Kadampa School to which the Geluk tradition, the yellow hat sector school to which the Dalai Lamas belong traces its lineage to. Atisha Dipankara had remained in Tibet for a decade eventually passing away in Lhasa. He translated a series of Sanskrit text concerning the

goddess Tara into Tibetan and Tara can be taken as a classic example of the deep religious communication that existed between Tibet and Bengal. Numerous of the Buddhist missionaries to Tibet arrived from Bengal. This occurred during the Sena and post Sena period when Buddhist Tantricism seemed to be making an adjustment with the Brahmanical Tantrayana that brought about the Shaktic form of Tibetan Buddhism. Under this we have the emergence of the Siddhas and the Mahasiddhas number in around 84, which in Tibetan is “Gyagar Drupthub Gayshig”. Many of these primary Mahasiddhas had come from Bengal such as Virupa, Tilopa, Narupa and Lavapa. Tilopa was born in Chittagong, Narupa belonged to a high status Brahmin family from Bengal, with the former being a teacher. Both of them seemed to have meditated in the caves of Pashupatinath temple in Nepal, hence we see these Buddhist masters hailing from Bengal, making forays into the Himalayan region. What is significant is that many of them had Tibetan pupils and disciples as we see in the case of Narupa, whose pupil was Marpa Lotsawa, who received the Tantric and other esoteric teachings from Narupa. Marpa is the founder of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism to which the Karmapas belonged to and thus there is a direct tracing of the lineage of one of the most important schools of Tibetan Buddhism to Buddhist masters arriving from Bengal. One of the important Mahasiddha was Naropa. Therefore, what is important over here is these Mahasiddhas or the Tantrics, they became the most important mode of connection between both the regions. There was a constant flow of teachings and teachers from Bengal to the Himalayas, specially, Tibet and a form of communication between both regions which are not monitored or regulated by a larger state authority. However what we see as to a larger extent is the relegating of the Tantric practices to the background, with reformism coming about in Hinduism as well as a certain lack of patronage towards the Tantric school. It should also be noted that Tantricism with its immense esoteric practices and rituals eventually became sidelined in society, which however continued in the context of the Himalayas and specially, with Tibet. However Tantricism seemed to be not really relying on much on institutionalization and there is a strong emphasis on the individual practitioner which is seemed to be providing a great deal of fluidity to the Tantric system and thus leading to its longevity. Now we come to this next important connection that was there between Bengal and the Himalayas which was seen in the form of trade which was there during the period of the Muslim rulers but also which was specifically emphasized or which grew, strengthened during the time of the British and specially during the time of the East India Company which was seen through the coming in of during the time of Warren Hastings, who built a contact with the Tibetans specially after the defeat of the Bhutanese in the hands of the British in the battle of Coochbehar, the Bhutanese requested, the Third Panchen Lama, the second most

important monk or the second most important hierarch in terms of Buddhism, to mediate between the Bhutanese and the British. With regard to Warren Hastings and the Panchen Lama broke peace between Bhutan as well as the British and eventually in return the Panchen Lama was offered some land, which right now is present in what we call as New Hooghly, known as the Bhotbagan. So we have in Ghushuri, the presence of the Bhotbagan, which was a monastery of the Panchen Lama. The important thing over here is however there was a medium which was present between the Panchen Lama and the British. And these particular medium were the Gosains, the Hindu priests who were present. The Gosains to a larger extent became the most important mode of communication between Tibet and the Himalayas, forming an important linkage between both the cases. However they were what we see over there is religion is again seen in the interactions between Bengal, Tibet and the Himalayas, even though this interaction is much controlled by the British. During the colonial times also there was an instrumental usage of religion by the British. Finally in conclusion what I would like to see is that to a larger extent we need to understand over here is that the earlier connections between Bengal and the Himalayas were seen to be much heterogeneous as well as it was seen to be much dynamic. Now they have been stalled with the dawn of the nation-state in the Himalayan spaces now seen in terms of security and strategy for post-colonial India as well as China. Also with the growing importance of the market the Himalayas have been turned into consumable commodities, what these connections do maintain, the linkage between Bengal and the Himalayas, it is seemed to be lacking the earlier open and fluid communications between the two spaces, which in the age of the nation-state will be a thing of the past.

Thank you.

A TALE OF TWO REGIONS IN COLONIAL TIMES: RELOCATING THE BENGAL BURMA CONNECTIONS

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I'm thankful to Lipi ma'am for giving me the opportunity to speak and I'd also thank to Professor Ranjit Sen, honourable chairperson of the session. My paper would try to explore the relation between Bengal and Burma during the colonial rule and I have tried to see that relation through some Bengali literary texts. This would offer how literature can be utilized for developing this kind of relation between Bengal and Burma under colonial rule. As we know that Bengal and Burma are considered to be colonial cousins. Therefore, both the regions have a shared and connected history, which has already been explicated by Professor Sugata Bose, Professor Sunil Amrit, Dr. Rajasri Majumdar in recent times. As a student of history, we have hardly put our attention towards literature and how it can be a useful alternative in rebuilding and recapturing the shared and connected history of Bengal and Burma as a colonial as well as regional city. Now I will try to explore the writings of Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay only, because there are few others who have dealt with this issue by producing different kind of writings about Bengal-Burma connections and their socio-cultural as well as economic life in a broader sense. We, the Bengalis generally know that Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay was famous for writing *Srikanta*, *Pather Dabi* and especially a short story called *Chhobi* (picture). Now I don't go into the details due to the paucity of time. Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay (1876-1938) spent a considerable part of his creative life (1904-1916) in Burma and worked briefly as a government clerk there. Both the novels *Srikanta* (Four parts, 1917-23) and *Pather Dabi* (The Demand of the Road, 1926) represented the complex and politicized view of the fortunes of Indians in colonial Burma. Sarat Chandra as a government subordinate clerk saw the life in Burma and his interpretations of life, socio-cultural aspect, economic aspect, relation between Bengali and Burmese- some of the issues, which has been thoroughly written in *Srikanta* and *Pather Dabi*. *Pather Dabi* was basically a text that narrated the revolutionary activities and the networks developed between Bengal and Burma under the colonial rule in disguise. Under this atmosphere of colonial rule, Bengal has developed a connection with Burma to strengthen the revolutionary network around this time. Most of the members of Jugantar dal, and Anushilan Samiti used to visit Burma to explore the nuances of the anti-colonial movement. The connections to transnational movements and the strategies of masquerade adopted by the people of Burma to elude the police and government

officials in Burma resemble those used by revolutionaries to attack armories, assassinate British officials and smuggle arms to Singapore, Japan and China. Here, one can mention the great Masterda Surya Sen and the Chittagong armory raid, which had a connection with Burma. Around this time, alternative revolutionary networks for Bengali revolutionaries had been developed to escape from Calcutta or Bengal border to Burma by making themselves masquerading.

Now, what we can develop by using the aspects inter-disciplinary approach in explaining those literary texts which had been produced under the colonial regime. One must understand that literary interpretation to recapture the history of Burma and Bengal. History, as a discipline, tends to forget these kinds of the flavor of history whose significance has been pointed out by Ranajit Guha, Dipesh Chakraborty, Gautam Bhadra, and Gayatri Chakrabarti Spivak. Those literary sources having their historical significance somehow overlooked or underrated by Historians since time immemorial. Yet, one can easily guess that serious intervention by the historians in exploring the importance of literary texts is required for conducting proper research in our country now. So we have been able to bring those flavors into our historical writings as well as our historical research. We used to go to the archives for exploring vast materials. Now, I am working on the proposed theme titled, Bengal-Burma military connection in colonial times and I've got few materials both on Burmese and Bengali. We have to accumulate all these sources to see or to reinvent these kinds of relations between Bengal and with the South Asian countries and largely the Asian countries. This paper, highlights how these literary sources, like those of Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay's himself could be tools, for analyzing the history, culture and politics in and around that time. If we read Sharat Chandra's writings on *Srikanta* or *Pather Dabi* or few of his other essays, we see that women have been placed in a very prominent role and they have been given special attention in those particular writings. Later on, Bharati Ray, Tanika Sarkar through their writings pointed out that women have been instrumental in the freedom struggle of our country. So we have to go long way to explore these kinds of sources to accumulate the shared and connected history between Burma and Bengal. This needs further elaborations.

Thank you.

COLONIAL BENGAL AND ASIAN CONNECT

Lipi Ghosh, Head, Department of South & South East Asian Studies

Director, Centre for Social Science and Humanities

Director, Centre for South & South East Asian Studies, University of Calcutta

Actually I must thank Professor Ranjit Sen first of all, because of his encouragement, lot of encouragement from a young age, I penetrated this world of South-East Asian studies to some extent, so that way he is my Guru too, not only Dada. So, today what I'm going to talk on, that is mostly Bengal's connection with Asia, the context of Thailand and Burma. On this Bengal, I mean West Bengal only, not the undivided Bengal. And first I'd like to talk about Thailand and then little bit about Burma. And I use the term Burma, because I'm talking about the colonial period, when Myanmar was known as Burma. So, about Thailand to begin with, officially in modern times, Thailand and India have been friends for 50 years. In 2017, we had celebrated activities both in India and Thailand. This year was the first year of the 8th decade of our friendship, that is, in 1947 Thailand was one of the countries which recognized India's independence for the first time. And now in context of this India-Thailand relation, where does West Bengal stand? That is a crucial question. So, historically we see that there were many relations context between Thai people and the Bengalis. Bengal was known as Banghla, or the lions of Banghla among the Thais. During the British raj, Calcutta was the British capital of India as such Calcutta played an important role in interaction with Siam and British India. The historical record says that King Rama II of Chakri dynasty sent an English envoy, whose name was John Crawford who went to royal Siamese court in 1821. He was commissioned by the ruler of Banghla. Later in 1872, the most illustrious king of Thailand, king Chulalongkorn, he visited India, and he first landed in Kolkata, Princep Ghat. His ship landed there, was parked there. And his main aim was to learn lessons from Indian civilization, the British administrative structure, etc. And what we see that during his tour in Kolkata, he visited Government's house, Indian museum, Asiatic Society, silver and copper mint, St. Pauls' Cathedral, Fort William, Barrackpore military facility, Alipore prison and also a few factories here and there. The king also met many Indian princes and Maharajas, Hindu pundits and Sanskrit scholars, leading Muslim merchants and intellectuals as well as common people were there. That visit to India including the two stays in Calcutta left a deep impression on that Siamese king and on his arrival back to Thailand we see its impacts on many administrative system as well as in many Thai architecture. So even during the later period we see that Ramasaran, that is reign of king, Prajadhipat, who was the great uncle of

the present king, had also the chance to welcome the greatest Bengali poet Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore who went to Thailand from 8th to 16th October, 1927 and he was accompanied by Prof. Sunitikumar Chatterjee. So Tagore's visit was another landmark in Bengal-Thailand relation and Tagore met again several princes and ministers from the royal Siamese court and a big gathering took place in Dusit Palace in Bangkok. On his arrival back and during his stay in Thailand, Tagore has written two poems - one is 'Oh Siam' or 'To Siam' and one is 'Farewell to Siam'. And after his departure from Thailand and after coming back to Shantiniketan, he encouraged Satyanandapuri to go to Thailand. When Satyanandapuri went to Thailand and he learnt Thai language, he mixed up with the royal family, and he could establish 'Asom Thai Bharata' that is, Thai-Bharat cultural lounge, which later on became the centre of political activity, to some extent Rasbehari Bose and Subhash Chandra Bose. So that is a separate history. So after Tagore we see that there emerged the age of pan-Asian nationalism. It was the decade of 1940's when Pan-Asianism was there and Japan was the originator of the Pan-Asianism and under Japanese influence we see that there was also an emergence of Pan-Thaiism, that is a Thai nationalist feelings and it is written in Tamatatthai, an archival source as that Subhash Chandra Bose, he met Phibul Songkram once and Phibul Songkram assured him of his protection of Indians in Thailand. So later on we see that *Asom Thai Bharata* or that Thai Bharat cultural lounge, it emerged as a national council and centre of the nationalist activities and then we see that a very famous conference took place during anti-colonial administrative system that was conference of 1942, Asia conference and there we see that Subhash Chandra Bose's presence was very prominent. And Netaji kept sense, kept on visiting Thailand more than once and he attempted to rouse the Thai people's feelings of nationalism and support towards Indian Nationalism. And what we see that in a meeting in a Chinese hall in Suriwan Road, a crowd of about three thousand Indians gave him a stirring ovation. Netaji stirred people to pledge money and materials for INA. Even what we see is that, Subhash Chandra visited Bangkok for the last time on 16th August 1945 and the Bangkok airport was flooded with people including the INA cadets and some Indian businessmen who supported the movement. And later on we have documented evidence that people like Price Vrithakorn and the Thai Indian Cultural lounge president Anuman Rachadong said that if Japan gets defeated in the war, then Thailand would grant asylum to Netaji. Netaji assured them that if situation demands so, then Debnath Das, a Bengali would talk to them. Debnath Das was even tried to arrange Netaji's hide in any Buddhist monastery in Bangkok but unfortunately we don't know what happened, we don't have any record that why Netaji at the last moment changed his decision to go on to Taiwan.

So, this much we know about the colonial period contact of Bengal with Thailand. I'm not talking about India, but Bengal only.

Next is Burma. About Burma my younger friend has already told and what I'd like to say is that, Burma is our closest neighbour, because we share about a thousand kilometers of common border and that way we have a shared history too. And compared to Thailand for Burma what we see, Bengali activities were more prominent. In Thailand, apart from Tamils, next important community was the Bengalis. Burma was annexed to British India by the Anglo-Burma war of 19th Century, intervention of colonialism added Burma's historical links to India, through its Buddhist identity. And what we see that throughout the 19th Century, Calcutta, the intellectual and cultural capital of British India, maintained a very close contact with Burma for political, commercial, strategic and economic reasons. For example, Fort William in Calcutta was the centre of military operations, formed the British an extension of Burma. The University of Calcutta and the first university of the colonial India produced 'educated' and 'smart' Bengalis, who were sent to Burma to run the day-to-day British bureaucracy. Hindu College, Calcutta University, Calcutta Medical College were all popular centres for Burmese people who studied here. The unstable administrative structure and political uncertainties in the mid-nineteenth century prompted British administration to try to centralize the bureaucracies of Bengal and Burma. Thus, we see Jackson College and Rangoon College were both affiliated with Calcutta University. Monk Uttama who opposed the separation of Burma from British India was associated with Bengal National College and had studied in Calcutta for three years before travelling around India.

Now next point is, Bengalis as reflected in literature or the vice versa, Burmese as reflected in Bengali literature. About Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Srikanta etc. we know, and my friend Manas has already told, so from Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay, from Suniti Kumar Chattopadhyay, there is another addition that is Amitabha Ghosh. Amitabha Ghosh's historical novel 'The Glass Palace' both de-constructs and celebrates this trope that is Rajkumari Mijo's character was turned to Burma in 1880's by a labour contractor in Burma who assured him that 'no one ever starves in Burma'. Ghosh's poignant narrative movingly delineates how the organizational discipline and superior technology of European colonialism transformed ancient Burmese culture and traditions. Now again if I come back to the point of this anti-colonial revolution and the Bengal-Burma factor, then we see that from 1920's Burma became the site of radical political activities for Bengali revolutionaries, who crossed armed struggle. The Chittagong-Arakan land route was particularly important and activists such as Surya Sen of Chittagong armory raid had walked in Burma. Then we also have the

Anushilan and Jugantar Samiti. They also developed close contact with Burma. I'm not going into more details, because I know, yeah, five minutes more. The immotation of printed materials from Bengal to Burma came under rigorous surveillance under British intelligence. For example, the editor of Rangoon Mail, Nripen Banerjee, etc., they used to publish and they were under control of British administrative system. We have many names to do like Bhupendra Kumar Dutta of Anushilan Samity, Trailokya Chakraborty, Hari Kumar Chakraborty as well as Subhash Chandra Bose, who were interlinked for some time. So what we see that to conclusion gradually and see that Bengal was a big factor in Burmese history starting from Suniti Kumar till Amitabha Ghosh. And Rabindranath Tagore was a big inspiration; I have a separate article published in one of my books, which is Tagore in South-East Asia. And there in the article shows that how Tagore is still very vibrant in the mind of the Burmese scholar. They have translated Nashtanir of Tagore in Burmese language. Many translations are there.

Finally, I'll just draw one point that is the activities of Mahabodhi Society about these relics of Sariputta and Mangalana and that way the Bengal-Burma connection. Here we see that British archaeologist Sir Alexander Cunningham, he excavated Ashokan Buddhist complex in Sachi, and that way we see that Mahabodhi Society took the initiative to bring those relics back to India. But later on, that was only the post-colonial, in 1939 that was colonial period; this Mahabodhi Society's activities were very prominent about these sacred relics. But later on what we see that, in the post-colonial period, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, he was very active to develop this Bengal-Burma relation by accepting a request of the Burmese government to keep some of the relics in permanent exhibition in Rangoon. So Shyama Prasad Mukherjee visited Asia, different parts of Asia, to Cambodia etc., he also visited Burma. And near Shwedagon Pagoda, there is this Taman Pagoda that is the world peace pagoda, where those relics are kept. So that way we see I also slacked behind the context of greater Indian society because that is another big story. But this way we see that Bengal is maintaining very good relations with our two close neighbours - Burma and Thailand.

Thank you.

JOURNEY OF A TEXTILE TRADITION: BATIK, INDONESIA & SHANTINIKETAN

**Rajasri Mukhopadhyay, Art Historian and Curator,
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Respected Chairperson, Professor Ranjit Sen, and my dear Lipi di, whom I have known for a long long time, since I was a student in Ancient Indian History Department in early 1990s, my dear colleagues and friends. We have heard a lot of historical deliberations from the morning. Mine is also a historical account but we can, we can give an alternative title - Tagore, textiles and travels. If you don't visit Indonesia, it is difficult to realise fully the importance of Batik. Batik is an invaluable heritage; it is a wax-resist dying method that needs intricate patterns on cloth. Batik is something which is spread all over the world in different forms. They are called by different names, but this wax based dying is there, we find it in the Tang period (618 - 907 CE), in China, we find it in the Nara period (710 to 794 CE) in Japan, but perhaps nowhere else it has reached the proportion, the delicacy and the grace, with its exquisite patterns and intricacy, like in Indonesia. In October 2009, UNESCO designated Indonesia and Batik as a masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage of humanity. Batik forms an integral part of Indonesian society. It was revitalized in the Soeharto era as cultural identity. In Indonesia there are thousands of batik designs and they have socio-cultural importance and significance. Patterns are related to rank and ritual. For example, some patterns are worn only by the royalty and some will be worn by a particular category of worker. During weddings I am told, the bride has to change dress as many as five times - each batik designated for a particular stage in the ritual of marriage.

As far as origin is concerned, we may say batik predates the written records of Indonesia, Java. This is an archaeological example that has been cited by historians to show the antiquity of the batik tradition. It's a 13th Century Javanese Prajnaparamita, the Buddhist goddess of transcendental wisdom. The sculpture has cloth patterns that resemble batik.



If you kindly take a close look, the clothes pattern that has been curved intricately, has a similarity between the ‘Ceplok’ patterns of batik. As I said, we find many patterns - we have *kawung*, *ceplok*, *gringsing*, *parang*, *lereng*, *truntum*, *sekar jagad* (combination of various motifs) and other decorative motifs of Java and *ceplok* patterns have been found sculpted on this particular sculpture. Cultural exchange with Java has been discussed in the morning, in the lecture of Prof. Suchandra Ghosh, and I’d like to reiterate the main points again. Java was host to Buddhist pilgrims on their way to China from India. The cultural relation between India and Java continued throughout what is known as the ancient Indonesian period of 5th to 16th Century CE. The inscription of Kelurak dated 8th CE, from Central Java, mentions Kumaraghosha from Gouridvipa. Gouridvipa is none other than Gaud or the then Bengal that included parts of Bihar. So, movements of monks, teachers and traders from South-eastern Bengal to Java was always there and Tagore’s visit maybe seen as a continuation. This research is mainly drawn from the literary source of Tagore’s letters from Java, and the visual source of Javanese batiks studied during a recent visit in Java and those preserved at the Kalabhavana museum, Nandan, and the Shantiniketan batiks. Rabindranath Tagore wrote 21 letters and 5 poems during his visit. The letters in Bengali was published as an eponymous collection “Javajatrir Patra” (1927) and later translated as “Letters from Java: Rabindranath Tagore's Tour of South-East Asia 1927” Volume 3, Tagore travelogues, edited by Supriya Roy, translated by Supriya Roy and Indira Devi Chaudhurani and published by Visva Bharati Publishing Department, 2010. Will be looking at Arun Dasgupta’s works regarding India-Java relations 'The Maritime Trade of Indonesia', in Ashin Dasgupta and M. N. Pearson edited

“India and the Indian Ocean” and discuss with Lipi di - since she just mentioned Tagore’s relation with South-East Asia.

Rabindranath visited Java in 1927. He headed south from Calcutta on a three and half month South-east Asian tour on 12th July, 1927. Tagore’s letters give a vivid account of his itinerary and encounters in Indonesia. Here is a photograph now preserved in Rabindra Bhavan, Shantiniketan, of Tagore and Surendranath Kar with royal couple and others in Java, 1927.



I would like to draw your attention to an interesting fact - that whenever Tagore travelled to other countries, he always had an artist accompanying him. In Japan in 1916 it was Mukul Dey, Nandalal Bose accompanied him on his 1924 tour of China and then again to Sri Lanka in 1934. In Java it was Surendranath Kar. Tagore was very keen on cultural exchange and taking an accomplished artist with him ensured that the distinguishing and new aesthetic elements and art-craft tradition was noted and imbibed through an expert was the best way of transplanting. Now, this is a photograph that was taken by me in 2017. Here a dance session is going on at the royal palace of Yogyakarta, known as Kraton or Keraton. The royal palace is known as Kraton in Javanese language.



Kain panjang or 2.5 meters batik skirt is worn by the dancers at Kraton. This dress is fascinating and what is more fascinating is, Tagore was impressed by the sane designs and textiles way back in 1927. Thus, it is a living heritage that is continuing over so many years! Such a strong tradition! These kinds of batik designs are reserved for the dancers.

Following is a mosaic of Javanese batik design. If you look at it carefully, you can discern many kinds of designs. They are pieced together to form this mosaic. The colours may be the same but each pattern is different from the other. Very minute, subtle difference and this can be done only by the canting.



They have various kinds of batik. One is inland batik or batik Kraton, which I just showed you, Javanese court batik is the oldest form of batik tradition known in Java. Inland batik has earthly colours such as black, indigo, brown and sogan, which is brown-yellow.



The sogen or sogen colour is very important, because this particular colour combination was taken in Shantiniketan.



This is the process of the batik that how we do it and the flower is from the coastal area.



The coastal area batik was influenced by other cultural influences and they imbibed stuff from, patterns from others. The inland batiks are more geometric and more traditional-pure.



Photograph by the author. This is a photograph of batik worker in 2017. Batik making, you can see. The pen, the wooden pen, is called the batik pen, or the Canting/'tjanting in Javanese language, Bahasa Indonesia. Javanese batik is characterized by fine, detailed work. One of the reasons that it flourished so much in the central Java is that all the ingredients are available there naturally and very easily. The tools and melting of beeswax at Yogyakarta has been documented - here you see the pen or Canting and there is a small wok or kadhui where the beeswax is being melted.



Surendranath Kar who accompanied Tagore in Java, was an artist and art teacher in Kalabhavan. His role in dissimulation of batik was very important. Before I go into Surendranath Kar, I would like to read out an observation of Tagore from Javajatrir Patra. This is in Bengali and I will translate that for Prof. Suthipand and our friend Jigme Yeshe -

নির্মলকুমারী মহলানবীশকে লিখছেন “কোমর থেকে পা পর্যন্ত শাড়ির মতো বস্ত্রবেষ্টনী” - Dancer দেব skirt দেখে, “সুন্দর বর্তিক শিল্পে বিচিত্র । দেখবামাত্র মনে হলো অজন্তার ছবি ।”. So, the skirts are referred distinctly. Tagore wrote to Nirmal Kumari Mahalanabis, that it was such a beautiful dress and they felt as if the dancers have come alive from the Ajanta paintings. Next, he is writing in a letter of 14th September -

“একটি টেবিলে বর্তিক শিল্পের অনেকগুলি কাপড় সাজানো , তার মধ্যে থেকে আমাকে তিনটি কাপড় পছন্দ করে নিতে অনুরোধ করলেন। সেইসঙ্গে আমার দলের প্রত্যেককে এই মূল্যবান কাপড় দান করলেন। কাপড়ের ওপর এইরকম শিল্পের কাজ করতে দু-তিন মাস সময় লাগে। রাজবাড়ির পরিচারিকারাই এই কাজে সুনিপুণ । এটা সুরাকর্তা I মৌকুনিগ্রো রাজার পরিবারে লিখছেন । তারপরে শেষে ১৭ই সেপ্টেম্বর প্রতিমাদেবীকে লিখছেন, আমি যখন চলে আসছি, এটি আরেক রাজার বাড়িতে, এটা রোজ জাকর্তায় , তখন আমাদের নিমন্ত্রণকর্তা আমাকে খুব একটি মূল্যবান উপহার দিলেন। বড়ো একটি বাটিক শিল্পের কাপড় । বললেন এই রকমের বিশেষ কাপড় রাজবংশের ছেলেরা ছাড়া কেউ পরতে পারে না। সুতরাং এজাতের কাপড় আমি কোথাও কিনতে পেতুম না।”

So this again shows that how batik was related to rank and file. The sultan gifted him that batik and said it was only meant for the royal family. So when Kalabhavan was instituted, Surendranath joined as a faculty. A frequent companion of Rabindranath Tagore, Surendranath had exposure to the best of the West and East. He consciously absorbed what was beautiful and useful and upon his return to Shantiniketan, applied it to the life there, adding new dimensions. On his return he taught the batik process to Pratima Devi, Tagore’s daughter-in-law and Nandalal Bose’s daughters, Gouri Bhanja and Jamuna Sen. Batik became a part of Kalabhavan curriculum. Gouri Bhanja was a leading and skilled designer and she adopted her designs to the technique. And here comes the contribution of Shantiniketan in the tradition of batik designs. A strong influence of alpina or ritual floor decoration is found in Shantiniketan batik, inspired by lotus, palash, hibiscus and kolke flowers. This is the hallmark of traditional batik of Shantiniketan.



If you study it carefully and you compare it with the traditional Javanese inland batik, you can see the brown and yellow. Those colours and the colour scheme had travelled here, been transplanted and retained. We have experimented with other colours, but the connection of Shantiniketan with Javanese batik is very clear.



It becomes clearer when we look at Rajasthani batik. As I said, that batik is not an uncommon process which is done only in Shantiniketan. It is practiced in some other parts of India too, for example Rajasthan.



But here is Rajasthani batik, look at the process of the cracking and waxing, it is much more, what shall I say, crude and raw, lacking the subtlety and sophistication of the Shantiniketan batik, inspired by Javanese batik. And finally this is a modern application of Shantiniketan batik, another unique contribution of Shantiniketan is applying the batik on leather, which was done in 'Amar Kutir'. A diversification carried on by Shantiniketan batik artists.



Now with bulk production and retail therapy it's leading to prints and factory productions. So handmade batik has become a very rare and expensive proposition and like in Java, we must patronize and keep this art alive as a part of heritage.



Since the respected Chairperson, has asked me to conclude, I'll conclude by highlighting the journey of a textile tradition. We often talk about our Indian religion, culture, language have travelled from the Indian sub-continent to South-East Asia, but here is a very interesting case of Rabindranath and Surendranath being very impressed by the tradition of batik in Java and bringing it to Shantiniketan, that gave rise to the unique 'gharana' or school of Shantiniketan batik that rose to be the most important batik tradition of India.

Thank you so much for a patient hearing.

BENGAL WITHIN THE PARAMETERS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN ECONOMY: AN ASEAN PERSPECTIVE

Suthipand Chirathivat, Executive Director, ASEAN Studies Center

Chairman, Chula Global Network, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

Thank you, Chair.

My heartfelt congratulation to Professor Lipi or Acharn Lipi for organizing such a important conference on Bengal Interface Asia. I am really happy to be here and for the invitation in such a prestigious conference. And it's all because of Acharn Lipi, without her initiative, this wouldn't have been possible. Bengal Interface Asia is an emerging topic of discussion, and yesterday's topics varied from archaeology, religion, culture, textile and people near and afar all faced aspects in understanding Bengal within the parameters of Asia. Bay of Bengal is an important trade route connecting Bengal with ASEAN and also BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative of Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation) comprising of seven countries and two ASEAN countries Myanmar and Thailand. Acharn Lipi talked about cross-cultural connectivity between these two regions and what Bengal means to us. I would focus on contemporary facets which deal with economic aspects and basically in line of convergence as themed in the conference.

Without spending much time, my topic is on Bengal within the parameters of Indian Ocean Economy from an ASEAN perspective. Here is the outline of my talk: First, on the Bengal connection with the Indian Ocean and its economic interactions with ASEAN; Second, on the Indian Ocean and what it means to the ASEAN and finally, Bengal within the framework of BIMSTEC and the Indian Ocean.

Today's world most important aspect is geopolitical and geo-economic realities in the region brought about renewed interest in the Bay of Bengal initiative. Strategically located in Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal lies in the wider strategic context in today's Indo-Pacific region. The new changing reality will not be completed without addressing role with the rising China and Belt Road Initiative (BRI) which includes Bay of Bengal in wider landscape and connectivity with the Indian Ocean and the world. From an ASEAN perspective, the Indian Ocean Economy comprising of blue economy of the third largest ocean of the world and those 28 economies which surrounding the ocean is rich with resources both land and sea. The economies that lie in the Indian Ocean Economy are actually helping in regional building.

ASEAN of late participation to the process has recently paid attention of the whole of the Indian Ocean Economy and along with is promoting regional maritime safety and security that include the Strait of Malacca.

In 2017, the summit in Jakarta of IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) brought out the importance of Indian Ocean with the extension to the Bay of Bengal to play a role in regional co-operation and integration which have been extended its term work to 2017-2021 for strategic interests and people-to-people connections.

With ASEAN open regionalism, ASEAN is known for its strong links with East Asian rapid growth and with network of production in development and reduction in transaction costs in which the Indian Ocean Economy needs to match up. The changing landscape of the Indian Ocean Economy is the reason why ASEAN has more recently started to “Look West”. Diversity of the ASEAN region, particularly in economic areas, growth advantages, and production network could help to forge production and people landscape and resources with more readiness of the region to move along with Indian Ocean Economy if joining together. ASEAN model of integration linkages with South, Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia, East Asia and Northeast Asia, is the case in point one needs to understand.

For ASEAN Integration, it is gradual characterized as work in progress, with open regionalism in a conscious way and group working “the ASEAN way” in decision making for regional integration among developing ASEAN member countries. The ASEAN Community founded in 2016 and the ASEAN Secretariat to its support, all of which look at the interests from the regional, national, down to the local level. Looking at the regional integration of Bay of Bengal, I sincerely think, sea and land dimensions are really fascinating if putting together, in a very diversifying context and continental region. Importance of the Indian Ocean Economy development and implications also for land-based economy with Northeast India are all linking with countries within the Bay of Bengal: Blue economy for Indian Ocean economy, shipping line passage for energy transfer to the Malacca Strait, and, of course, the future of Mainland Southeast Asia, and in connection with the rising economy of the region, mainly China.

To take an example, ASEAN fishery alone accounts for 18% of global fishery and this same share of fishing sector would expect to be up by 25% in 2030. Tourism is another area that has great connection with the increasing of middle class sector in which many low-cost carriers are presently catering people in the region. Disaster Management is another important sector we need to pay attention. Countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar are vulnerable and prone to natural disasters, especially with Typhoons, Cyclones and Tsunami.

For future challenges, I believe the Indian Ocean economic activities, and particularly in the Bay of Bengal, land and sea, the blue economy, with ASEAN, will move closer together. For us, the role of China cannot be denied for our strategic interest, especially, ASEAN has still to come up with its own strategic version to counter a rising China, both mainland and maritime Southeast Asia. ASEAN has also to deal with the Indian Ocean Economy within the framework of IORA. India's position in the Indo-Pacific region has strong implications for ASEAN decision making in the regional and global context. Bengal within the framework of BIMSTEC, which have just completed 22 years as sub-regional organization is still looking for a relevance. They signed MOU which includes six areas of co-operation, like sub-regional energy group. And Northeast India connectivity with Southeast Asia and transport connectivity with the region had recently made a new move in its "Act East" policy to invest more in infrastructure.

In the end, Bengal's flurry of activities are the six new areas of co-operation are, connectivity, foreign investment, energy, people-to-people contact, cultural tourism and blue economy and also mentioning the enhancing capacity of Secretariat. Thailand proposed the connectivity for BIMSTEC particularly coastal shipping arrangement running from Thailand's Ranong on Southern Economic Corridor and Eastern Economic Corridor which would connect ports of Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. BIMSTEC also prioritize India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and Kaladan Multimodal Transport Project, which would benefit Northeast India. The development and diversity of Bay of Bengal Initiative in connection to the Indian Ocean could be seen in the context of rapidly increasing needs as per the global and regional dynamics and the changing landscape. Global future of Bengal is not easy but should be sustainable and resilient enough to connecting with all other on-going initiatives and institutional framework.

Here follows some important pictures which are supportive of my present talk.

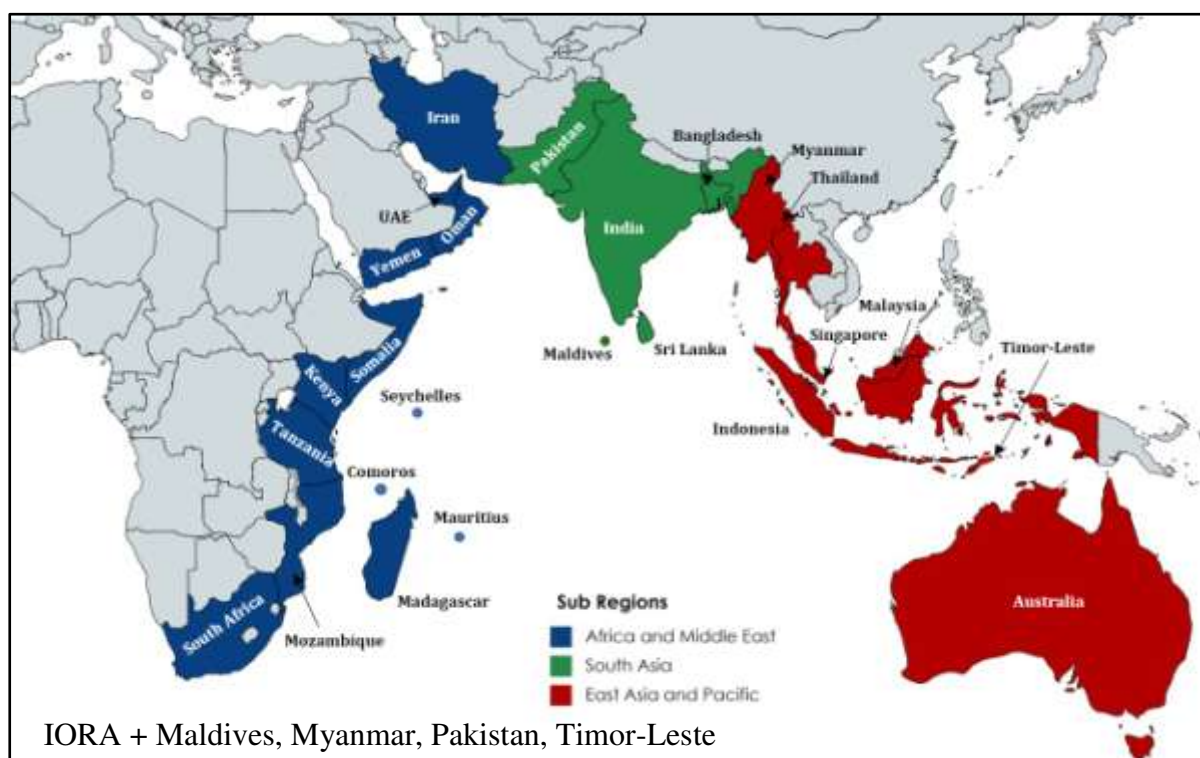
Thanks again.

TRADE BETWEEN SELECTED ASEAN COUNTRIES AND IOR (IN US\$ MILLION)

Country / Trading partner	2008			2013			2014		
	Exports	Imports	Total	Exports	Imports	Total	Exports	Imports	Total
ASEAN-5 to IOR	77375.42	104611.03	181986.45	98194.81	130773.51	228968.32	92582.08	120226.1	217808.18
<i>Singapore</i>									
East Africa and Island States	1682	658	2340	2615	696	3311	1932	700	2632
South Asia	15785	8705	24490	17135	9508	26643	17704	8710	26414
Middle East	7666	38373	46039	9356	44507	53863	9478	43259	52737
Total	25133	47736	72869	29106	54711	83817	29114	52669	81783
<i>Malaysia</i>									
East Africa and Island States	1549	946	2495	1888	1077	2965	2464	945	3409
South Asia	10394	3332	13726	12104	5611	17715	13041	4476	17517
Middle East	8085	7648	15733	8351	9516	17867	7502	10922	18424
Total	20028	11926	31954	22343	16204	38547	23007	16343	39350
<i>Myanmar</i>									
East Africa and Island States	12	2	14	5	4	9	7	9	16
South Asia	974.07	268.28	1242.35	1391.35	764.7	2156.05	1429.54	988.8	2418.34
Middle East	54.35	18.75	73.1	73.46	46.81	120.27	71.54	52.3	123.84
Total	1040.42	289.03	1329.45	1469.81	815.51	2285.32	1508.08	1050.1	2558.18
<i>Indonesia</i>									
East Africa and Island States	1109	1170	2279	2408	839	3247	2,408	839	3247
South Asia	9330	3041	12371	15946	4273	20219	16106	4273	20739
Middle East	5328	8408	13736	5840	12149	17989	5840	12149	17989
Total	15767	12619	28386	24194	17261	41455	21946	16422	38368
<i>Thailand</i>									
East Africa and Island States	2353	1123	3476	3542	2435	5977	3369	1355	4724
South Asia	4968	2877	7575	7409	3791	11200	7868	3328	11196
Middle East	8356	28041	36397	10131	35556	45687	10770	29059	39829
Total	15407	32041	47448	21082	41782	62864	22007	33742	55749

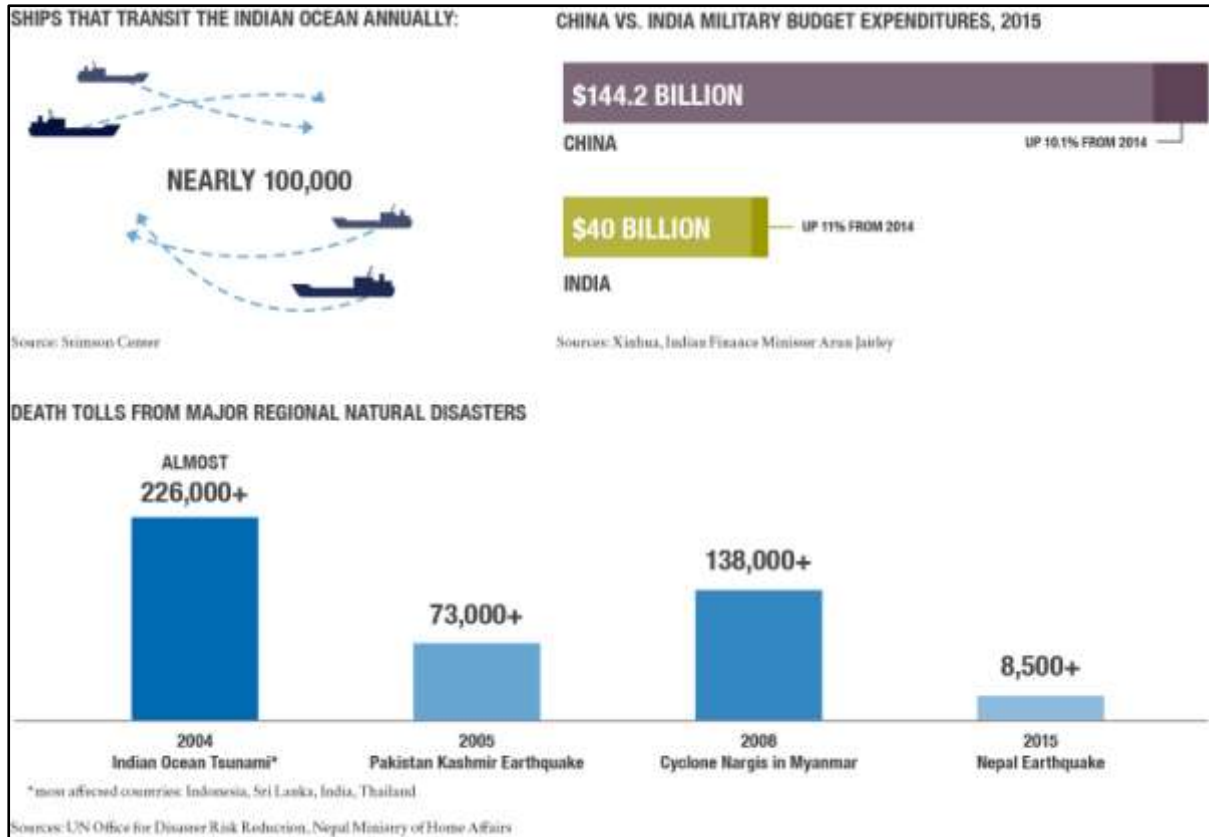
Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook 2015*. Washington, D.C. IMF, 2015

VAST IOR ECONOMY: 25 ECONOMIES OVER 3 CONTINENTS

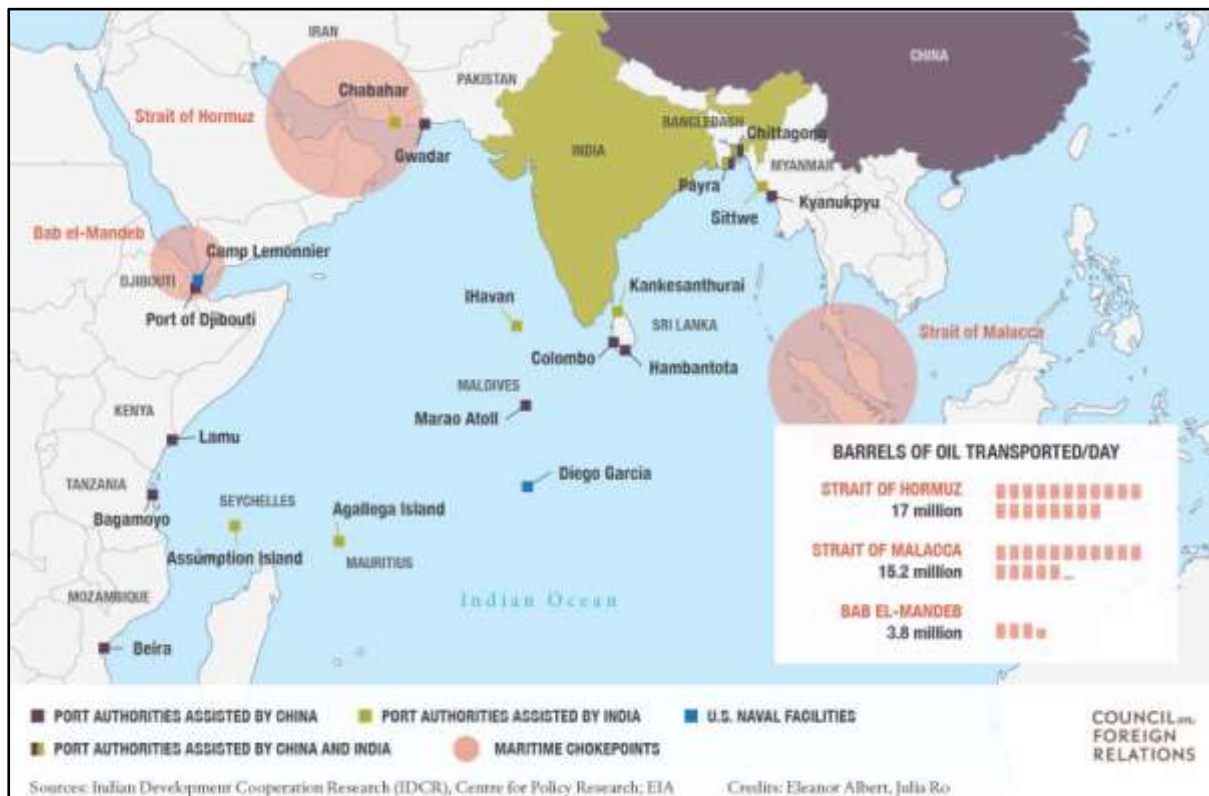


Source: Wignaraya, G. (May 2018)

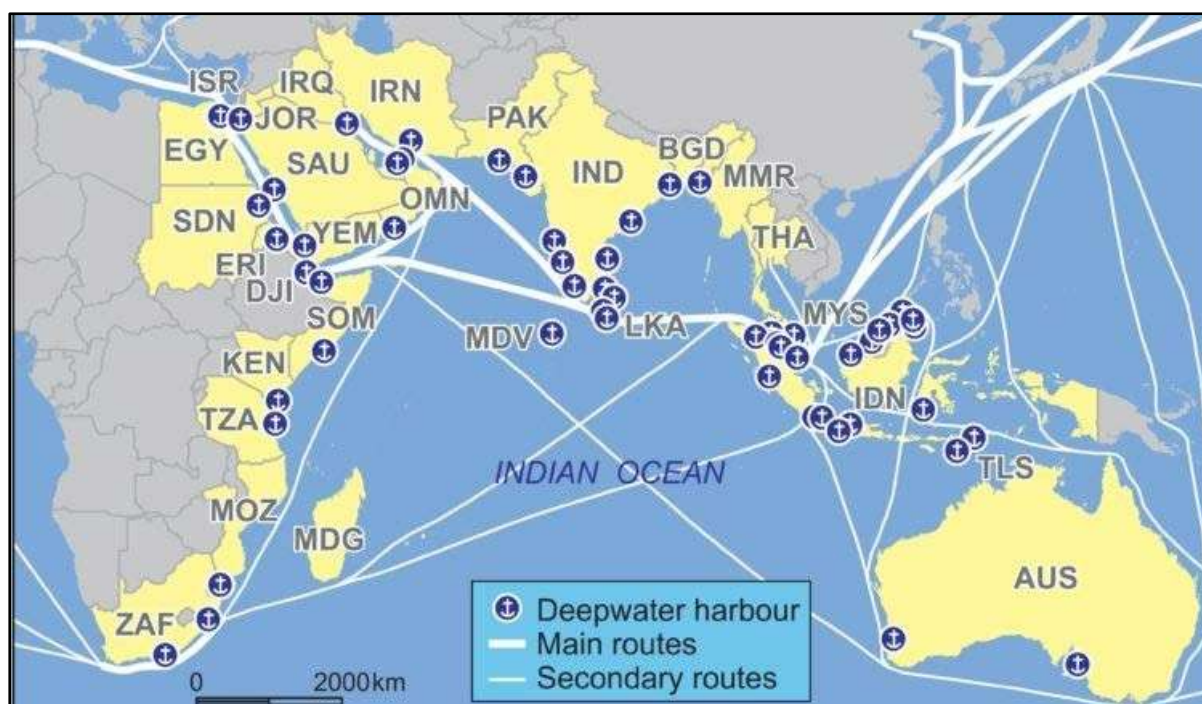
INDIAN OCEAN BY THE NUMBERS



INDIAN OCEAN PORT DEVELOPMENT



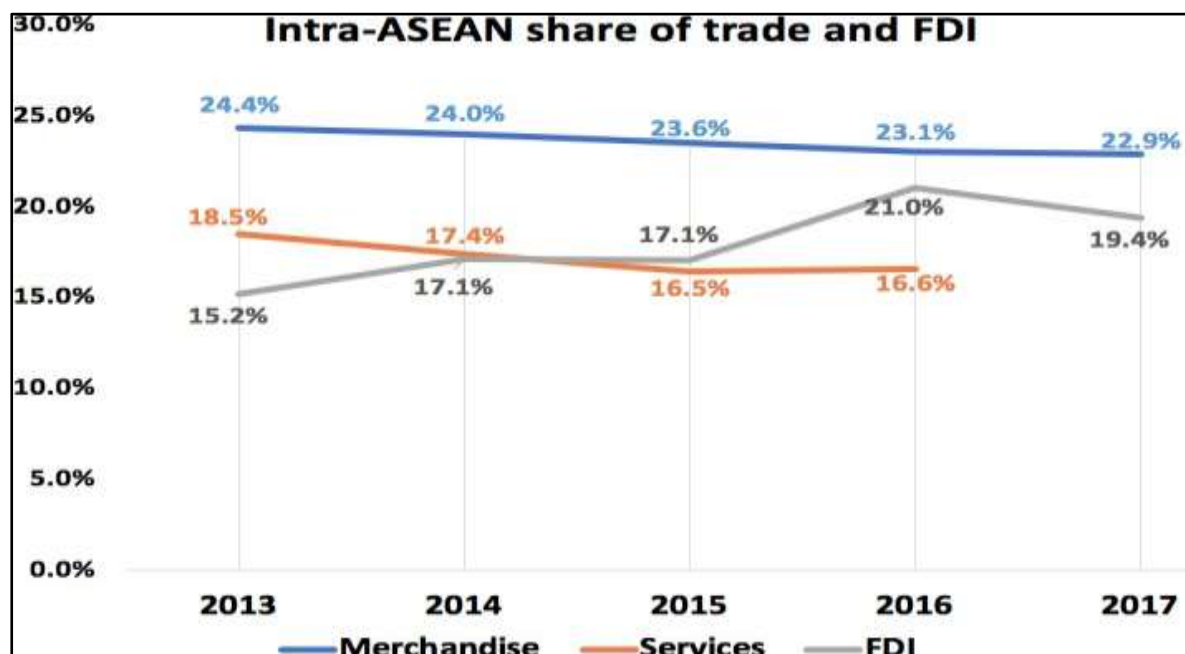
INDIAN OCEAN TRADE ROUTE



Source: <https://mapsforwhap.weebly.com/indian-ocean-trade.html>

ASEAN CONNECTIVENESS IN TRADE AND INVESTMENT

The level of integration via trade and FDI flows in ASEAN has grown significantly over years, but seems to be stalling despite rise in volume.



Source: ESCAP's calculation based on data from ASEAN stats

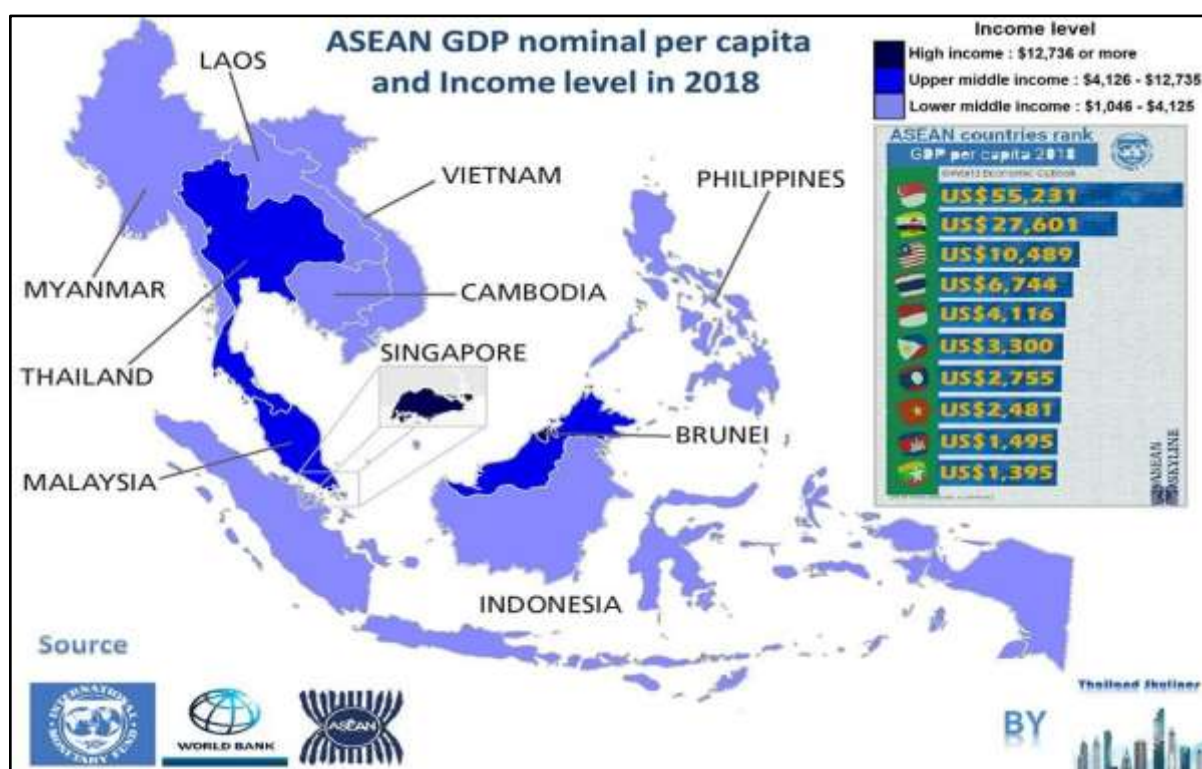
ASEAN'S OPEN REGIONALISM IS BIASED IN FAVOUR OF EAST ASIA

Export destination (%)

Exporter		<i>ENE</i>	<i>SEA</i>	<i>SSWA</i>	<i>NCA</i>	<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Asia-Pacific</i>
	East and North-East Asia (ENE)	31.7	12.6	5	1.8	2.1	53.1
	South-East Asia (SEA)	31.8	2	5.1	0.5	3.6	65
	South and South-West Asia (SSWA)	11.7	6	10.1	2.1	1	30.9
	North and Central Asia (NCA)	17.5	1.7	7.9	7.5	0.1	34.7
	Pacific	47.2	11.7	4.2	0.2	7.4	70.7

MAIN REASON FOR THIS LIES IN ASEAN'S TRADE COSTS

Table Intra- and extraregional comprehensive trade costs in the Asia-Pacific region (Percentage)							
	<i>ASEAN-4</i>	<i>East and North-East Asia-3</i>	<i>North and Central Asia-4</i>	<i>Pacific island developing economies</i>	<i>SAARC-4</i>	<i>Australia and New Zealand</i>	<i>European Union-3</i>
ASEAN-4	81 (2.6)						
East and North-East Asia-3	82 (-2.0)	62 (-3.4)					
North and Central Asia-4	369 (2.1)	182 (-9.1)	116 (-5.6)				
Pacific island developing economies	198 (-8.7)	193 (-3.9)	448 (35.1)	158 (-5.7)			
SAARC-4	155 (0.2)	143 (-5.1)	336 (7.5)	357 (-4.7)	141 (5.2)		
Australia and New Zealand	108 (-1.3)	97 (-6.7)	361 (-4.9)	92 (-7.7)	155 (-8.5)	53 (-2.3)	
European Union-3	116 (-3.0)	93 (-5.1)	159 (-6.4)	215 (-7.2)	128 (-1.8)	116 (-3.3)	42 (-8.1)
United States of America	96 (7.5)	72 (-0.8)	185 (-3.4)	176 (-5.2)	130 (4.1)	104 (0.8)	74 (0.2)
Source: ESCAP calculations based on ESCAP-World Bank Trade Cost Database. Available from http://artnet.unescap.org/databases.html#first (accessed 30 June 2017).							



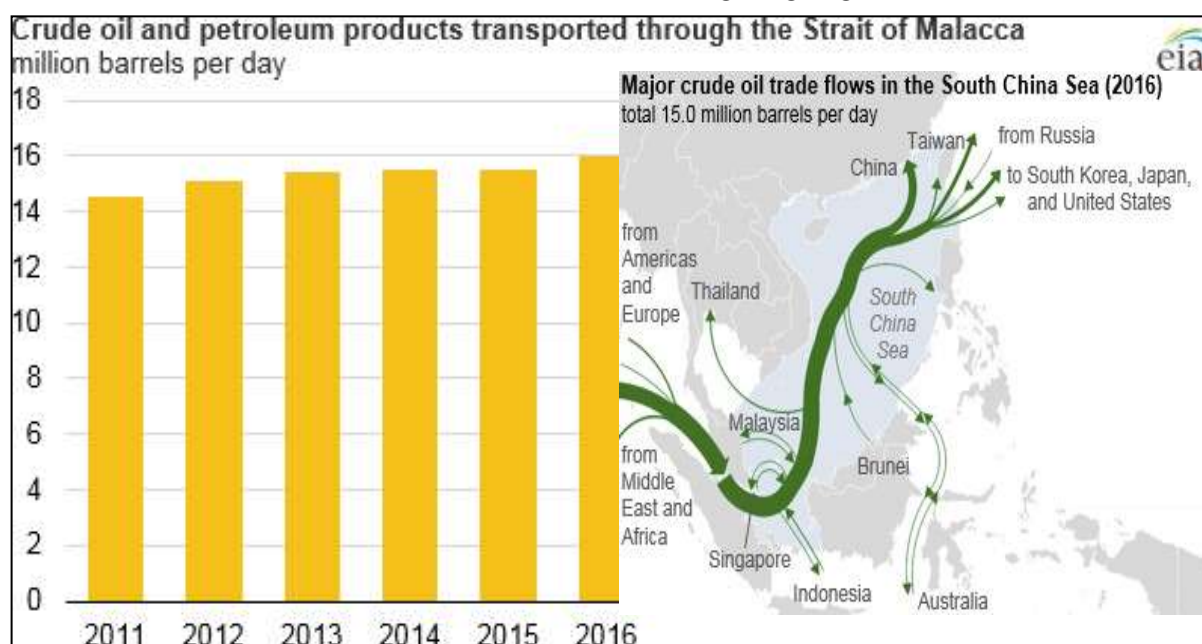
LINER SHIPPING CONNECTIVITY INDEX, ANNUAL, 2004 – 2007

YEAR	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ECONOMY														
China	100	108.29	113.1	127.85	137.38	132.47	143.57	152.06	156.19	157.51	165.05	167.13	170.85	158.76
Singapore	81.87	83.87	86.11	87.53	94.47	99.47	103.76	105.02	113.16	106.91	113.16	117.13	119.53	115.07
Malaysia	62.83	64.97	69.2	81.58	77.6	81.21	88.14	90.96	99.69	98.18	104.02	110.58	102.49	98.08
Sri Lanka	34.68	33.36	37.31	42.43	46.08	34.74	40.23	41.13	43.43	43.01	53.04	54.43	61.91	69.42
Viet Nam	12.86	14.3	15.14	17.59	18.73	26.39	31.36	49.71	48.71	43.26	46.08	46.36	61.85	60.47
India	34.14	36.88	42.9	40.47	42.18	40.97	41.4	41.52	41.29	44.35	45.61	45.85	58.17	52.91
Thailand	31.01	31.92	33.89	35.31	36.48	36.78	43.76	36.7	37.66	38.32	44.88	44.43	47.29	41.05
Indonesia	25.88	28.84	25.84	26.27	24.85	25.68	25.6	25.91	26.28	27.41	28.06	26.98	29.62	40.85
Philippines	15.45	15.87	16.48	18.42	30.26	15.9	15.19	18.56	17.15	18.11	20.27	18.27	27.91	24.97
Myanmar	3.12	2.47	2.54	3.12	3.63	3.79	3.68	3.22	4.2	6	6.25	6.23	9.32	13.79
Bangladesh	5.2	5.07	5.29	6.36	6.4	7.91	7.55	8.15	8.02	7.96	8.4	9.31	11.34	10.79
Cambodia	3.89	3.25	2.93	3.25	3.47	4.67	4.52	5.36	3.45	5.34	5.55	6.69	8.85	7.98

- The UNCTAD's Liner Connectivity Index records how well integrated countries are with global container shipping networks. It is based on five components: number of ships, their container-carrying capacity, maximum vessel size, number of services, and the number of countries which deploy container ships in their ports.

Source: <http://unctadstat.unctad.org>

THE STRAIT OF MALACCA, A KEY OIL TRADE CHOKEPOINT, LINKS THE INDIAN AND PACIFIC OCEANS



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2017 World Oil Transit Chokepoints

Note: Includes crude oil and petroleum liquids.

Table 1. Volume of crude oil and petroleum products transported through world chokepoints and the Cape of Good Hope, 2011-16 (million b/d)

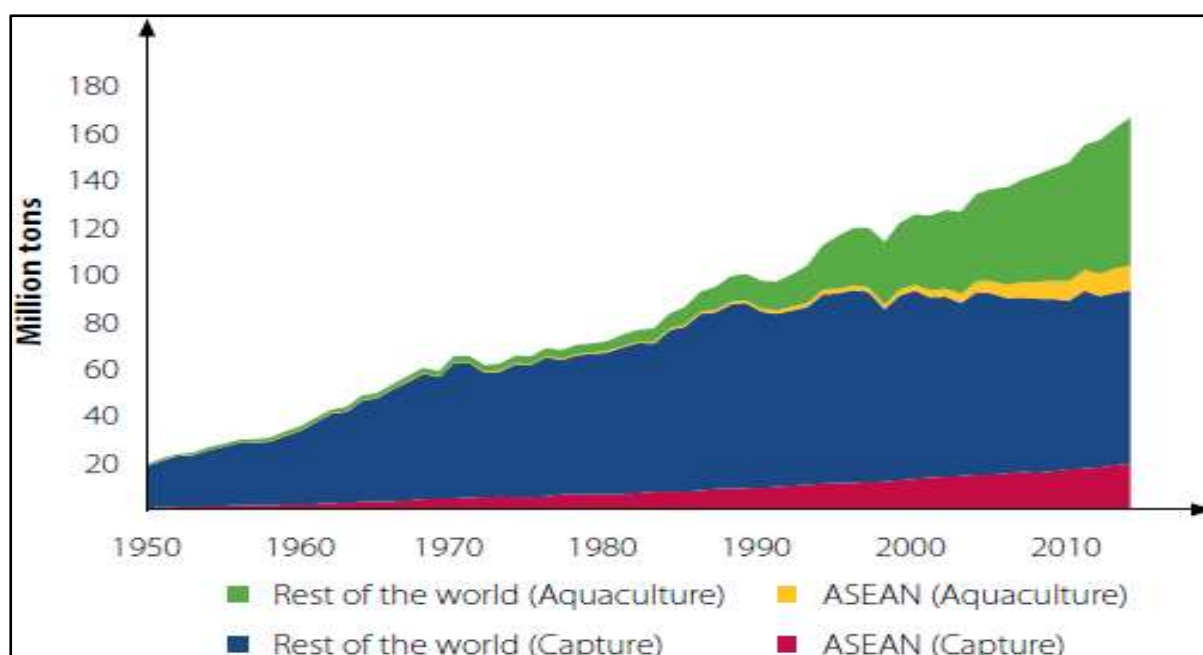
Location	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Strait of Hormuz	17.0	16.8	16.6	16.9	17.0	18.5
Strait of Malacca	14.5	15.1	15.4	15.5	15.5	16.0
Suez Canal and SUMED Pipeline	3.8	4.5	4.6	5.2	5.4	5.5
Bab el-Mandab	3.3	3.6	3.8	4.3	4.7	4.8
Danish Straits	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.2
Turkish Straits	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.4
Panama Canal	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.9
Cape of Good Hope	4.7	5.4	5.1	4.9	5.1	5.8
World maritime oil trade	55.5	56.4	56.5	56.4	58.9	n/a
World total petroleum and other liquids supply	88.8	90.8	91.3	93.8	96.7	97.2

Note: Data for Panama Canal are by fiscal year.
Sources: U.S. Energy Information Administration analysis based on Lloyd's List Intelligence, Panama Canal Authority, Argus FSU, Suez Canal Authority, GTT, BP Statistical Review of World Energy, IHS Waterborne, Oil and Gas Journal, and UNCTAD, using EIA conversion factors ⁴

- Nearly one-third of the 61% of total global petroleum and other liquids production that moved on maritime routes in 2015 transited the Strait of Malacca, the second-largest oil trade choke point in the world after the Strait of Hormuz. Petroleum and other liquids transiting the Strait of Malacca increased for the fourth time in the past five years in 2016, reaching 16 million barrels per day (b/d).

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2017 World Oil Transit Chokepoints

FISHERIES PRODUCTION IN SOUTH EAST ASIA



Global and ASEAN capture fisheries and aquaculture (excluding aquatic plants) production share, 1950–2014.

Source: Chan CY, Tran N, Dao CD, Sulser TB, Phillips MJ, Batka M, Wiebe K and Preston N. 2017. *Fish to 2050 in the ASEAN region*. Penang, Malaysia: World Fish and Washington DC, USA: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Working Paper: 2017-01.

MARINE CAPTURE OF ASEAN COUNTRIES IN 2015

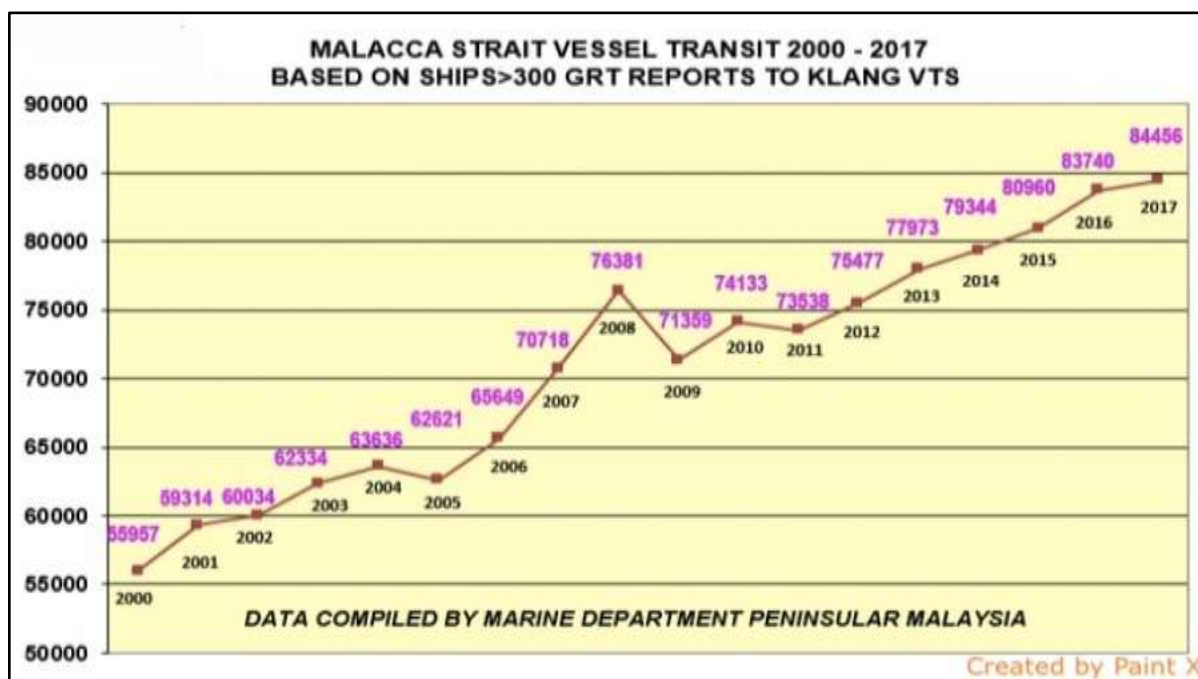
Country	Marine Capture	
	Quantity (MT)	Value(US\$1000)
Brunei Darussalam	3,370	9,303
Cambodia	100,984	
Indonesia	6,065,060	8,031,919
Lao PDR		
Malaysia	1,486,050	2,382,430
Myanmar	2,854,200	4,852,140
Philippines	2,094,346	2,710,338
Singapore	1,265	9,348
Thailand	1,317,217	1,486,032
Vietnam	2,839,900	
Total	16,762,392	19,481,510

Source: SEAFDEC's report

APPENDIX

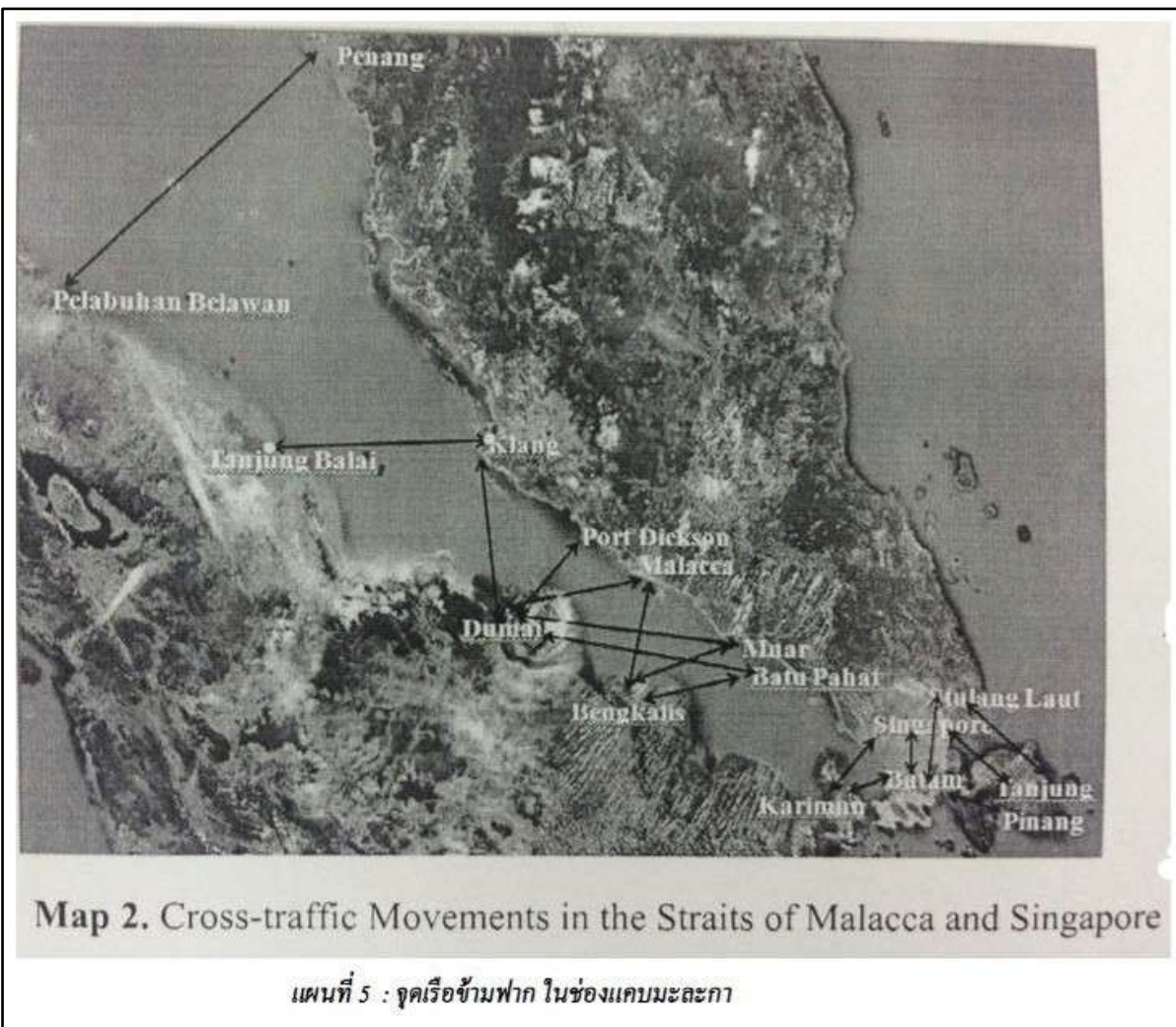
Thailand's Border and Transit Trade

- Total cross-border trade at 119.5 billion baht in January 2019, with exports of 634 billion and imports of 56.1 billion baht.
- Malaysia, biggest partner for border trade (47.7), followed by Laos(17.1), Myanmar(15.8) and Cambodia(14.4)
- Total transit trade at 24.4 billion baht in January 2019 with exports of 10.5 billion baht and imports of 13.9 billion baht.
- Southern China, biggest partners (with 10.4 billion), followed by Vietnam (8.4 billion) and Singapore (6.0 billion)
- Thai government remain committed to drive overall trade at 15% grow that 1.6 trillion baht (around) 50 billion US\$ this year).



Defying difficult market conditions traffic in the world's busiest shipping lane, the Malacca Straits, continued to grow over the last three years hitting an all time high of 84,456 transits in 2017.

Source: Sea trade Maritime News



- Phuket:** A total of 8.4 million passengers arrived at Phuket International Airport in 2017, which is a 12% increase compared to the previous year. The airport hosted a total of 3.5 million passengers during the first four months of the year, representing nearly 19% growth compared to the same period in 2017. While the domestic volume edged up 8%, the significant increase was led by international arrivals which grew by 28% to 2.1 million, accounting for 59% of the overall passengers. The substantial uptick was mainly international flights, which represented a 27% year-on-year growth. (*Source: C9 hotel works*)
- Bali:** The Statistics Office for the Province of Bali reports that tourism arrivals for the month of February 2017 totaled 453,985 comprised of 447,762 arriving by air and the remaining 6,233 by sea. On a month-on-month basis, arrivals in February 2017 increased

20.82% as compared to the same month one year before. Total Tourist arrivals from all foreign sources for January-February 2017, hit 914,809 increasing 25.95% over the same period the previous year. (Source: <http://globalexpatsrecruiting.com>)

- **Singapore:** In 2017, Singapore attracted 17,422,826 visitors, according to the Singapore Tourism Board's statistics. This was a 6.2% increase from 2016 which was 16,042,593, increase 7.7% from 2015. (Source: *Singapore Tourism Board's statistics, 2018*)

FISHERIES PRODUCTION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

- In 2014, the 10 ASEAN countries together accounted for 18.3% (30.6 million tons) of world fish production (167.3 million tons). Indonesia, Vietnam and Myanmar are among the top 10 fish producing countries globally. Excluding aquatic plants, Indonesia alone accounted for 6.4% of world output and Vietnam 3.8% in 2014.
- World capture fisheries production has remained stable at approximately 90–95 million tons per year over the past two decades, albeit with some fluctuations. Nevertheless, capture fisheries in the ASEAN region increased their output at 2.8% per annum between 2000 and 2014

(Source: Chan CY, Tran N, Dao CD, Sulser TB, Phillips MJ, Batka M, Wiebe K and Preston N. 2017. *Fish to 2050 in the ASEAN region*. Penang, Malaysia: World Fish and Washington DC, USA: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Working Paper: 2017-01).

FISHERY PIER IN RANONG PROVINCE, THAILAND (ANDAMAN SEA)



- Ko Tong fishery landing pier

FISHERY TRADING SESSION IN RANONG, THAILAND



- Busy fish landing pier from Thailand Myanmar boats, fish also sold for both Malaysian and Thai markets.
- Auction is running every day, usually in the morning.
- Malaysian buyers are purchasing more with higher price than Thai counterparts.

FRESH FISH CATCH FROM ANDAMAN SEA IN KADAN ISLAND, MYANMAR



THE GEO-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF BENGAL AS THREE ECONOMIC SUPERPOWERS BATTLING FOR INDIAN AND ASIAN MARKET

Indrajit Adhikari

Editor (Business), Ananda Bazar Patrika, Kolkata

Good morning.

Thank you Professor Ghosh for your kind invitation to this wonderful seminar. Professor Bhaumik, dignitaries in the panel, respected professors present here and of course students...

Just a few days back, I saw one of my friend googling a particular term to know its meaning and when asked what exactly he was searching for, he promptly replied that he was actually doing a research on so and so to probably pen a few lines about it. The reason I started by stating this is to make a clear confession upfront. That is as googling is not research, by that same analogy I am also not an expert of the subject of today's discussion. Hence I don't know how many students are present here. But if it's x , please consider it to be $x + 1$ as it includes me as well. Secondly, it's not a paper. It is merely an observation of a journalist, who has spent more than a decade in financial journalism. It is more of a description outlining how I see West Bengal's perspectives in the Asian emergence, particularly South and South-east Asia.

Last month I was fortunate to take part in a seminar in Dubai, organized by Arizona State University and US Embassy. Topic was South Asian trade. And the interesting thing is, out of a total of probably 65 journalists from across Asia (as I can recall 11 from India, 23 from Pakistan and the rest from Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), the only notable absentees were Chinese journalists. But to be honest, it speaks volume! The sheer organization of that particular event depicts today's South Asian Trade scenario clearly. US embassy organizing the event and giving such huge importance to Indian and Pakistani journalists and at the same time not involving China is message enough to decode, particularly in this volatile time of Trade War between those two giant economies. Washington knows that China is the main threat in trade in this part of world and they are desperate to counter that. There is no denial that this part of the world is emerging fast as one of the most growing and lucrative market. Everyone wants a share in this pie, particularly after the demand in the developed world has been slowing down for a considerable time now. This is probably one of the reasons why we are having this discussion and also why Bay of Bengal, Asia and South-East Asia has become the talk of the town.

Three economic superpowers, India, China and United States of America, are all trying to go full steam in this area. They are all looking for a market share. Why? Answer is simply the sheer size and potential of this market and also it's geo-political importance.

Delhi understood South Asia and South-East Asia's potential long back, probably in the early 90's during Narsimha Rao's regime. He was the first Prime Minister to go to this region with a clear objective to conquer it by hard push from the financial front. It got importance in Manmohan Singh's regime as well. Current Prime Minister Narendra Modi also keeps talking about the importance of South Asia and South-East Asia as well.

Why? The first thing is, as I mentioned, it's a huge market and humongous. People with a lot of purchasing power and hunger for different goods and services have made this place such a vibrant market. It's not that everyone has such buying capacity but in total it looks fairly attractive. On top of that, after the collapse of Lehman Brother's and recession of 2008, West is also realizing fast that the days to depend solely on the American and European market are possibly over. For two reasons, given the volatility of the world finance, you never know when a business will get struck. Even in the best markets in the developed world. In that case this is can be literally a fantastic bet for hedging. Secondly, this is also a market, which is showing insatiable demand even for the high end and luxury products. This is a market where Louis Vuitton sells. Rolls Royce, Mercedes and BMW all are giving paramount importance. And they are top, super-expensive luxury brands, right? This market has started demanding Mercedes and Maruti both in tremendous quantity. Who will not want to cut a share into it?

This is the reason Bengal has a very strong potential, to encash its geo-strategic location. Just look at how Bangladesh is unleashing it. Asian Infrastructure Investment bank (AIIB) headquartered in China, has promised to make investment of 165 billion dollars in Bangladesh and other countries near the Bay of Bengal. India has also promised to Sheikh Hassina's government to invest 2 billion dollars for infrastructural developments in Bangladesh, particularly in big port areas because of the threat from China.

The reason growing Chinese influence in this region is so alarming that Beijing is actually dumping debt and everybody knows it. Just look at Southern part of Sri Lanka. They are building a port, where 80% equity is in Chinese hand! They are designing the debts in such a fashion that it's very clear from the beginning that it will be very difficult to pay it back. And the interesting part is, China doesn't want the payment back as well! Because their key condition is if one fails to pay back, they will take an equity or stake in that project. And it's worth remembering that those projects have not only become their business projects, they are becoming their strategic points as well, like their naval base for future.

They are happy enough to apply this same strategy to Pakistan, Bangladesh and many other countries. China is flushed with fund and ready to invest large. But at the same time, they're putting the debt taker's sovereignty at risk. Here comes the immense opportunity and paramount importance of India as it goes without saying that it is the only country which can at least try and has the potential power to counter this Chinese threat. It's absolutely crucial for its own progress as well. This is one of the reasons why world has started looking up to India in this regard and precisely for that Bengal has to play a key role. Look at Bangladesh, how it has merged itself in the entire value chain of garments. Of course there are labour issues, there are other problems like being in the rock bottom of that global garment industry value chain. But still it was an important first step to be associated first as then only one can get the scope of climbing the ladder. Bengal till now hasn't been able to do so. But if we miss the bus, it will probably cost us too dearly. We have to use this potential for sure, especially when we have such nice geo-strategic location, ports and can build other necessary infrastructures in place.

Just look at World Bank report of 2017, Carnegie report published recently or even the recent report of World Bank in collaboration with United Nations. They all speak volumes about the region's huge potential. According to the numbers, South Asian countries have trade potential of 66 billion dollars, in rupee term which boils down to 4.75 lakh crore rupees in between them! But the actual trade amount is 23 billion dollars (Rupees 1.12 lakh crore only). So the loss of potential is staggering 44 billion dollars that means 3.12 lakh crore rupees!

Another study by a Nepalese think tank claims that, if just common grid can be used for supplying electricity in South Asian countries, it can save 2,000 crore rupees per year. So that is the scale of potential we should keep in mind. How can we let it go?

Recently I was talking to one of my friends from Afghanistan, Imtikhar. He is a lecturer of Kabul University, a smart chap and very nice fellow. I was telling him the goldmine of opportunity we are sitting on. Imtikhar told me, Afghanistan was also in similar situation (may be in a far smaller scale) a few years back. US was interested in them. So were Russia and China. But it all went untapped. With sadness in his eyes, he told me, from that huge potential, Afghanistan eventually became the country constantly rocked by militancy and the biggest industry was making artificial limbs because of huge demand generated by severe landmine blasts!

So potential is something and realizing that potential is something different. It needs a lot of political will, a lot of political courage. It demands a lot of thematic thinking and appropriate policies to unleash those potentials. At least till today, they are missing.

The first problem to point out is probably red-tapism. We all know how the bureaucracy runs. We all talk about the time they take to make decisions, the no of departments one has to go to clear a file or the no of layers of decision making. I once heard that a Ministry sometimes even spend a week just to decide where the meeting will take place, how the table will look like, as it symbolizes the power, the protocol. These protocols, bureaucratic delays are there in developed countries as well. But as we are looking to grab, snatch and win we have to go to that extra mile. I believe, there is certainly huge potential but at the same time with enough roadblocks as well. We all keep saying that West Bengal is the place of brightest minds, where the skilled labour is abundant. But where is the industry then? Where are the takers of that skilled labour force even at far lower cost in compare to other states? Forget about mere MOUs, where are actual big ticket investment in the ground? And not only in West Bengal, probably all parts of the country is experiencing investment drought.

The last point, I will like to draw the attention to is distribution of wealth and whether we have policies good enough to take the benefits of growth to the last man standing. Recent Oxfam report screams that whole world is facing the problem of jobless growth. It's a matter of immense importance, Growth is fine, but how many people's lives we are touching up? How many people are getting employed? Rather as a journalist, alarmingly I am seeing a very different kind of economy emerging. Say INOX or any multiplex, doesn't expect that 100% will come to their screens to see the movies, they will think of the top creamy layer of 10% alone, who will serve their purpose. Shopping Malls, car companies and many more follow this same model. Hence the question crops up. Is investment enough? Is growth sufficient alone? What is the usefulness of wealth if it cannot be distributed properly?

I keep coming back to an intriguing example. I heard this from P. Sainath, a legendary journalist in his own right. He once shared an experience with me. It goes like... once in Mumbai he saw a huge multi storied building coming up, where each apartment is having a personalized swimming pool. Out of mere inquisitiveness, he asked labourers, where they had come from. They replied, Ganjam district of Orissa. The reason was jaw dropping. According to them, in their native place, the ground water level has gone so low, that they cannot do cultivation to make a living anymore. Just think of the irony once. The same people who could not continue their agricultural activities, simply because of scarcity of water are building apartments with personalized swimming pools! And yes, how much water does it take to fill up just one swimming pool?

So, my last point today is even if the potential is realized, will that be inclusive enough? Will the benefits really reach even to the bottom of the pyramid? Will that really pull

people up from below the poverty line? Or simply will we continue to rely on that same Trickle Down theory? These questions need to be answered for sure.

If that last mile reach happens in reality, then the potential truly comes to life. Then we all will be very proud of Bengal's potential and its realization. Yes, Bengal is sitting on a goldmine. But whether that gold can be surfaced and then can be distributed properly? Only time will tell.

Thanks for your patience.

Thank you so much.

THE ROLE OF 'EAST' FACTOR:

INDIA'S DEEPENING ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH ASEAN

Debashish Chakraborty

It is very kind of CU for inviting me for this conference. I will just look at the ASEAN factor in India's external trade and possible implications on Bengal. The economic relation of India as a whole with ASEAN in 70's and 80's lacked economic currents and Bengal was no exception to this general trend. Only from 1991 onwards the economic relation started deepening and we may remember that Mr. Narsimha Rao in his first foreign visit, moved eastwards to Japan, setting aside the decades-long trend of going to USSR first. This facilitated inflows of foreign investments from Japan. After 1997, when India tried to engage with ASEAN, their relation with ASEAN initially became a function of the prevailing economic stress in South-East Asia in the aftermath of the East Asian crisis.

So let us judge the advantages of India in ASEAN market from the emerging facts. Let us also see if we can draw certain conclusions with these observations on possible benefits for Bengal. First, let us consider the transition of Indian strategic mind-set from the Look East Policy in 90's to the Act East Policy launched from 2014 onwards. If we consider the number of regional trade agreements or RTAs that India has entered into from 2005 onwards, an interesting observation emerges 2005 was quite important because from 1995, i.e., the reception of WTO, for a decade, India relied more on the multilateral trade reforms for export promotion. But during the successive negotiating forums, e.g., 2001 WTO Doha round, 2003 WTO Cancun round and so on, we see that more trade through multilateral reforms was not going to take place. So from 2005, i.e., after the failure of the Hong Kong ministerial meeting, India took up plans for regional trade agreement participations.

And what we see in today's context is that, a number of RTAs have come up involving India and other East and South-East Asian countries, some of which displayed multiple memberships. For instance, there is a separate RTA with Singapore and we also integrate with Singapore through that India-ASEAN agreement. Today the negotiations for regional comprehensive economic partnership, i.e., RCEP, which is going to be ASEAN plus six trade agreement, that is six of the countries, with which ASEAN already has a partnership or trade agreement. So in this particular set of agreements that we have now, what is the advantage for India? One, we get 0% tariff in all the countries on our exports where there is a regional

agreement. But on the other hand, in each of the market we also find plenty of challenges. What are the challenges? By WTO code, a country is bound to charge the MFN, Most Favoured Nation treatment against all WTO member countries, so that will be, say, 5%, and all the countries who are part of the regional agreement, as a pre-condition there will be a 0% tariff. If we compare India, China, Japan and New Zealand, i.e., all the RCEP partners an interesting fact emerges.

With ASEAN, if we look at China, they have actually enjoyed a first mover advantage against India and many other countries in accession of the ASEAN market. So if we look into China's RTA negotiations with ASEAN, it started in 2002 and if we look at other country's move for RTA, the negotiations started in 2005. Just look at the Indian move in that context. We started the negotiation way after in 2004 and then we took a long time to conclude the negotiations on 2010. So, in ASEAN market, China already enjoys a 5-year head start.

Now, we start talking about the advantages of India with ASEAN and with RCEP. What we usually find is that, in the ASEAN market, the development as we call it, it happened, through something called a 'Flying Geese' model. What was the 'Flying Geese' model? Initially after Second World War, Japan received economic support of USA during reconstruction days and got economic boon after the couple of years. Japan became an exporter of electronics and several other manufacturing products and components. But, Japan being an island, labour supply not infinite, and so labour cost start increasing, and if we calculate that the comparative advantage in vertical axis, and time on horizontal axis, we see for Japan at the time of 1970's, competitiveness started decaying. So Japan was interested initially in investing in the nearby economies, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong followed. We may remember all of them were small economies, and hence the labour cost increased there as well in long run. So, Japan went on to include, four of relatively advanced ASEAN economies, namely - Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines, initially. Only after that the investment and technology transfer drive spread to China, Vietnam and in the new millennium to India finally.

The earlier speaker, Mr. Indrajit also mentioned about Bangladesh getting integrated with the global value chains, which actually is a result of South Korean FDI and technology coming to the country. Well, if you look into the bottom line, first I mentioned about the investment of Japan initially and then South Korea and Singapore going to developing countries, with labour cost advantages. But if we also look at the sectors to which investments are actually made another interesting dimension emerges. In all the strategically prospered markets, for the simple reason, you do not really need to spend too much on training, skilling,

reskilling efforts on the labour force. Once, the first skill level is developed through FDI in the textile sector, then they can expand to the more technologically sophisticated groups like chemical, iron and steel, automobile and finally to electronics industry. So in ASEAN case, what we found, and China as well, there had been a gradual investment from abroad, which developed the local labour force, so when investment for the next phase of industrial development begin, it was way easier for the ASEAN countries, for would be entrepreneurs, exporters, though investments from other countries, which generated the requisite skilled labour for their purpose.

If we now look into the Indian example, in India, what we have found? In the first phase, even after the liberalization, first there no FDI or modest flows up to mid '90's, and then FDI jumping into services sector. Investment never came to the manufacturing segment the way it happened in Southeast Asia, so as a result of that, the way there had been a gradual skilling of workforce, in ASEAN, South-East Asia, that never happened in India. So when we look at less Japanese investment or the less investment from South Korea coming to India, this is one of the primary reasons.

There is a second reason what we must understand today. Number one, in garments, what are the national or international standards that are required? It would be relating to labour standard, it would be relating to components, e.g., certain chemical dyes, which are carcinogenic in nature, but that's the end of it. If we look into the next case, automobile for instance, in that case what we are going to find is that, there are two standards that exist, one is the UNECE 1958 standard stewarded by European Indian, one, the UNECE 1998 standard, steered by US. Today India is member of the UNECE 1998 standard. What is the advantage for a country in adopting or conforming to any of these standards? That is when they accept to one of the standards, in all the countries who also follow that standard and you can export without additional testing or certification.

I would just give one example; it will be much easier for everybody to appreciate that. Why the standard is important in automobiles? So mostly in India, in automobiles what we have is something called demist. So at the time of rainfall, you just put the windows up, then if you're just going to switch the AC on, there will be a shade that in the front windowsill, so the comes the need of the demist function, if you turn the AC on, the machine will get rid of that. That is sufficient with the Indian context. In European Union, you require defrost as well as demist in the vehicles for obvious reasons. So in case India go for 1958 EU standards, what it means then, in India any automaker, have to install both defrost and demist functions, so Indian consumers have to pay for both.

Just one more example, there is provision of installing a body sensor in UNECE 1958 standard. So in Delhi, Mumbai or Calcutta, when we are having bumper-to-bumper driving on all office days, which means, the sensor would keep on ringing all the time. So you will have to install the sensor, disable it, and then only put the vehicle on the roads, essentially price would be up by some 10 thousand. So if all the UNECE 1958 standards are incorporated, what is the outcome? The automobile will be costlier by around Rs. 2 lakhs. Will the consumer be paying for that? Less likely. Now the moot question is, will Japan invest in India? That Indian exporter would begin to export to, say the European Union market, is also less likely. Because even if India move to the UNECE 1958 standards, you cannot export to European Union seamlessly. So the more you move away from textile and garments in each sector, there will be an international code of standard which will be very important first to understand whether India is ready to go for it and unfortunately most of the sectors have not conformed to the next way of standardization yet.

So if we try to consider the value chain integration in South-east Asia, say look at the computer hard disk made in Thailand value chain, highlighting the exporters as we can see they are procuring, importing raw material from all over the world and exporting to the rest of the world as well. It is a standardized form. By the way, Thailand is a member for automobile for UNECE 1958 standards, which means they can export to any member country in the world. Next, if trade opening up happens, what is a short term catch for an industry, for the bureaucrats, for the government for that matter? In trade, when we try to reform, there is a thing called a smile curve. So, it can be said that, India is already having the resources, the skillset, and the goodwill of the bureaucrats and policy makers, but when our country will have a full smile, or it will be a half smile depends on several factors.

To explain what it means, I take the example of China, and iPhone. If initially Apple, let us say, starts integrating the Chinese firms in the Apple value chain, initially China might have a modest share, because there is only a contract manufacturing. With Apple now getting more and more Chinese firms integrated into their value chain and then is a possibility that share of China might decline in the value chain of iPhone. Why? A couple of things might happen there, for one, Apple might now be transferring technology to China, so Chinese firms are now producing more at a cheaper price, so they are enjoying economies of scale. Second, the Chinese traders will not want the Thai traders to be part of the Apple value chain, so they would try to offer price discounts to dissuade Apple from going there. A lot more factors might be there. But once China is able to integrate Apple; then Apple would come to China and make it their Asian production base, one might expect that Apple will not only produce in

China, and so procure more and more quantity of parts and components from China, they will also start marketing, branding, and all other value-added-service activities therein. So in other words, China's collective contribution in Apple value chain is going to rise.

Now, where is India? We may try to check our position in the ASEAN value chain. We will see that for most of the products, China has enjoyed a full smile. For India, we are mostly at the bottom point. If we check in on an industry-by-industry basis, and if we look at the world input-output database and other resources from which such comparison can be made, the conclusion prevails. So the idea is that in India, we are still not able to enjoy the advantage of the openness, and the greater integration with ASEAN. So, what is the response that India had undertaken over the last couple of years? We see is that 'Make in India' is one set of policy that we keep hearing most frequently. There had actually been a number of policies not only for the last 4-5 years, but over the last 10-15 years which tried to, enhance manufacturing and exports from the country. The electronics policy 2019 is the latest addition to these efforts, and in the entire target is how to integrate India more in the ASEAN value chain.

There are two or three things that are involved, one, well, of course, that is the supply rate of skilled workers, which the 'Skill India' mission is trying to respond to, and second, whether the foreign traders investing in India, are coming with technology. Essentially the point to check is whether the FDI is a green field investment or a brown field investment that is whether it is an acquisition of our existing firms that may not really mean that the foreign player is coming with a technology transfer. So what we see is that over the period we have witnessed a modest success, Japanese or Singaporean players are coming with actual technology, part of which, as I said, can be explained by the fact that already the likes of Nissan, Honda etc., have established base in South-East Asia. For India to attract them here, we also need now have quality conformation with the international standards, which has not happened yet. So in short term what we observe is that we are getting the trade deficit with Southeast Asia, given modest export success. It is natural because, when China and other countries are on the upside of the smile curve, India happens to be at the bottom end, so what it means that the domestic value added content for the actual export made from India is going to be relatively weaker.

So we observe that India's trade orientation with ASEAN is increasing, ASEAN's share in Indian export is rising, but India's trade deficit with ASEAN is also increasing. Next, what we see, when India is importing from several ASEAN members, the products covers technologically sophisticated products like machineries, for example from Thailand, and

mineral, fuel etc., if we look at Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. But when we are exporting it does not really work out for a build-up competitive product in all the shared markets. One of the major roles of IIFT is to conduct export potential survey for each state every 10 years. My colleagues have done it for West Bengal and other North-east states earlier; and I have recently done the same for Nagaland. What we have found, in each market the focus might be purely on a country-centric export that India is making. It is not that a particular product group is becoming competitive, so India's export to all the other ASEAN markets is getting facilitated over time. So this is what has been one of the advantages that we are able to get up to individual ASEAN market's needs, but disadvantages as well, when we negotiate with all ASEAN countries for further market access reform.

So if we try to come to the RCEP negotiations which are going on at present. In ASEAN, we already talk about the merchandise product, it is a RTA in merchandise, but RCEP is going to cover merchandise, services as well as investments. So that is going to be a more facilitating trade agreement for India's trade growth. We also have already a couple of agreements and we see there is an agreement on standard technical regulation and confirmative assessment, the 2nd agreement actually came into existence in November 2018, which means that certain countries are not going to put additional quality standards at the entry point at the time of import, which is the advantage that India is going to enjoy. One of the reasons why India cannot export more to ASEAN countries as compared to China is that India-ASEAN FTA is not having any quality standard clause, which China-ASEAN FTA embodies. So the absence of the quality standard provision actually gave India severe disadvantage and now in RCEP forum we are trying to correct that. What's the flip side? The flip side is China. In RCEP China is the only country, with which India is not having any trade agreement at this point. For ASEAN, already there is a trade agreement, with Japan, South Korea, already there are trade agreements, with Australia and New Zealand, the negotiation process is going on. With China when India is allowing import, it is attracting duty, 10%, 8% and for some products, 30% actually, and even then we have to impose anti-dumping duty on Chinese imports. If after formation of RCEP RTA, imports from China come at 0%, it would not be a good outcome from the Indian manufacturing segments, which are still at the modestly developed phase. The belt and road initiative of China, which actually enabled them to integrate a number of Southeast Asian countries in their value chain, as Mr. Indrajit earlier also underlined, from the political economic standpoint might suppress India's development initiatives in the region.

We also need to note the possible trade implications of ACTA - the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement, as generic medicines are one of the major exports item that India wish to export. Now some of them might face a challenge. A couple of years back the European Union confiscated the genetic medicine export of India to Brazil arguing that it is a generic medicine, so they must check whether the patent right of the original molecule inventor is getting infringed upon or not. India had to file a WTO dispute against EU to get the case dropped. Now Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, all the developed countries part of RCEP negotiations, is also members of ACTA. All the countries have agreed for provisions under RCEP that are extremely stringent. Example would include data exclusivity provisions, the clinical trial of a particular corporate has undertaken, but they have not submitted the test results to India as per the Indian patent office requirement. If they do not want to submit, should India accept all these requirements? This is something where the RCEP negotiations are actually getting slow.

So, just to conclude, as I have already overshot my time, I'll take two more minutes. Will the eastern region benefit from the Act East perspective? One Say, through investment coming from South Korea, Japan, Singapore? It is less likely. As I said what Honda, Nissan or any Japanese corporate would do? They would look at, when we talk about production network, for automobile for instance, there will be tier 1, 2, 3, 4 at various end of the supply network that would be required to come to India. And the supplier network may not immediately switch to India, even if the Honda or Nissan agree to upscale their production in India. Will Indian players will be able to maintain the quality standard? Make in India - 30% domestic content requirement is one of the provision and many foreign corporate believe it will be difficult to comply with that in short run.

In East India for instance, what we see the number of clusters in each major industrial segment had historically been weak. So, immediate investment from East and Southeast countries are less likely. So, currently the initiative that is happening in Bengal, in East in particular, is trying to develop Bengal as a gateway to ASEAN through Calcutta port, through the agar port, the proposed one, and also through North-east several initiatives are is going on. Some of the notable initiatives to connect Eastern India with the 'East' include the India-Myanmar friendship road, the Bangladesh-Nepal-Bhutan-India route and China's proposed economic corridor joining Calcutta-Kunming and so on. We will see in the coming days how these links work out, and how Bengal benefits. As of now a couple of products, both from primary and manufacturing segments, have been identified by IIFT's West Bengal Export Potential Survey as the winner items and possible export opportunity set. However

investments the country has to draw from ASEAN partners or RCEP partners to facilitate the process in long run, is less likely at the present context.

Thank you.

ENVIRONMENT AND CITY - SHARING EXPERIENCE WITH KOLKATA AND PHNOM PENH

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Good afternoon Chair, Professors, Eminent guests and my dear students. The relationship between city and natural environment has been circular with cities having massive effects on natural environment while natural environment in turn has profoundly shaped urban configuration. Cities and their environment interact and shape the natural environment; however, increase in urbanization is a necessary condition for economic growth of any country. These are the two cities you can see it looks almost same, however the left hand side is Kolkata and the right hand side is Phnom Penh. These are the city maps, I think it's 1990, in Phnom Penh rate of population in the city is 7.57, whereas in Kolkata it is 8.7. Left hand side is Phnom Penh, its 2015, and the right hand side is Kolkata which is 2010, I didn't match both of them because I couldn't get the picture. However, the density in 2015 of Phnom Penh was 3.16%, whereas that of Kolkata was 0.59, and now Phnom Penh has the same rate of growth, that is 3.16, whereas in Kolkata has reduced to 0.17. I know there are many points to be discussed in this perspective but I've taken four major scenarios, which is unsustainable urbanization or land use, then we have waste management, wetland implication and deforestation and the last is air pollution. Now cities everywhere are not sustainable, in fact the average city dweller consumes many more resources and there is far more greenhouse gases than their rural compatriots anywhere in the world. If more people move into unsustainable cities, resource consumption will increase, meaning urbanization could lead to near certain disaster not just with global climate but also with regards to air pollution and water. Next I will go to industrialization, industrialization reached to urbanization by creating economic growth and job opportunities that brought people to the cities. Urbanization typically begins where a factory or multiple factories are established within the region, thus creating a high demand for factory labours, other businesses such as building, manufacturers, retailers and service providers then follow the factories to meet the product demands of the workers. This creates even more jobs and demands for housing, thus establishing the urban area. Now the third is ecological issues, I have divided Phnom Penh and Kolkata in this perspective, now for Phnom Penh, there can be a reduced flow of drinking water in Phnom

Penh because of upstream development of the Mekong basin and climate change. Water scarcity may become a problem with reduced flows combined with population growth and increase in per capita water use. While in Kolkata, the daily water requirement of Kolkata is about 290 million gallon and it's largely taking from Hooghly River. Now Kolkata city's water supply is dependent on both surface water sources from the River Hooghly and ground water sources. A large part of Kolkata metropolitan area is currently served by ground water pumped up from an aquifer deep below the city. If the city draws from the aquifers more rapidly, then they can't recharge themselves. The water level is also decreasing fast due to overuse of ground water at the rate of 2070 litre per year, and groundwater level is not increasing because of more sedimentation of cement and concrete. Next we go to waste management. Now waste management I've made certain points from Phnom Penh and Kolkata Hooghly, so I've been discussing about that already. Now waste management is one of the biggest challenging issues in developing countries, in particular developing countries in Asia has serious environmental and public health problems, due to large amount of municipal wastes being dumped into open dumping sites, roads, drains, water bodies, etc. on a daily basis without adequate management. Phnom Penh is no exception and national and local governments are facing similar challenges in waste management, due to population growth, increasing income and consumption levels, expanding urbanization and inadequate waste management due to lack of proper waste collection and treatment facilities. Technical staff as an unclear responsibilities among staff members was also there. Now Tonle Sap being breeding area for fish, water bugs, fresh water turtles, amphibians thrive in the lake, due to deforestation, there is erosion of soil and silts of the lake, and problems of fertilizers contaminating the water supply. Now dams on the Mekong, notably in China and Laos could disrupt entire Tonle Sap cycle. Overfishing and conversion of traditional spawning grounds to agricultural area is also there. Now in this perspective I would want to see that they're trying to make this waste management a kind of a circular economy, and they do not want to export it to other countries but want to keep it, and use it in their own state and also Coca-Cola company is interested in helping the waste management of Phnom Penh. Kolkata, solid waste management in urban area has become a major problem with the rapidly increasing growth of population, urbanization, industrialization and economic development, the major wastes are household wastes, food wastes, market wastes, industrial wastes, commercial waste, biomedical waste, e-waste. However, Kolkata generates about 2700 metric tons of solid waste on a regular basis. The elements of solid waste management are waste generation, collection, segregation, storage, transport, disposal and treatment, there are various ways to dispose of this solid waste that is open dumping, land-filling, incineration,

composting, etc. Kolkata Municipal Corporation is the chief authority to manage solid waste in Kolkata, but they take help from some private organization for hiring trucks to dispose wastes at dumping sites, for appointing contractual labourers on a monthly or an annual basis. The left hand side is Phnom Penh's condition, and the right hand side is of course our city. Next is wetland degradation and deforestation, now the major problem of Phnom Penh is huge urbanization and the second problem is rubber plantation in agricultural fields. This is one of the major problems which is actually degrading the soil nutrient and this production of agriculture of the crops that we eat is being damaged, so this is a very major and serious issue of Phnom Penh right now and also the municipality has moved poor communities from the centre to the outskirts of the city which can have a negative impact on the environment because of excess of clearing of the greens. Kolkata, the east Kolkata wetlands comprises of inter-tidal salt marshes, salt meadows and water treatment areas such as sewerage farms, settling ponds and oxidation basins. Now it supports over hundred species of plants and rare mammals and is home to sustain 40 species of local and migratory birds. Due to influx of population and urbanization of Kolkata, there is a demand for large scale reclamation of all forms of nature including East Kolkata wetlands, which has altered the natural drainage in the city causing frequent flood. Now severe impacts on Sundarban because of organization, city's expansion, and natural resource requirement is high, which has led to large scale deforestation of mangroves, siltation and pollution. Sundarban is facing ecological changes due to the unprecedented discharge of domestic and industrial emission which is carried out by the tributary rivers along with contaminated disposal, mud from Haldia port complex, and heavy metals slowly changing the estuary's geochemistry and affecting local coastal environment, affecting marine life and indirectly affecting the humans. The topmost is the Sundarban area and the lower part is the Mekong Basin. Last option is air pollution, I have put in high/moderate level of air impurity, high of course is for Kolkata and moderate is for Phnom Penh, because our air quality level is almost 90% or 97% impure while that of Phnom Penh is 67% impure. So I've put in together. And air pollution is the world's largest single environmental health risk as recognized by the World Health Organization and a significant number of epidemiological studies which has reported the adverse transport emissions constitute one of the highest contributions to the concentration of total particulate matter, impacts of air pollution, exposure on human health in recent years. In cities across the country, the unusually high concentration of dust particles in the air round the year, have aggravated the problem of air pollution irrespective of season. The toxicity of in the air caused by ill managed wastes and their disposal is a reality in most cities. Now open burning of solid wastes, contamination of water bodies, surface fires, tunnels, landfills, polluting

industries, transport - lethal transport systems, owning of private cars and the love to use them and smoking is one of the major reasons the air pollution is so high. Of course upper one is Kolkata and the lower one is Phnom Penh. Lastly I observed the major thing that can be done in sustainable land use, green mobility, assessing environmental impacts, reviewing existing policies, and new human rights for sustainable living. Firstly for sustainable land use if we are trying and wishing to make a smart city, then we should well plan our cities, there should be well planning of drainage system and other facilities which are available in that particular area. Green mobility keep the urban transport environmentally sustainable, for selection of appropriate transport more in our society owing to energy requirements might fairly come at possible consequences of energy scarcity of oil based transport and damages caused on environment, the scheme of environmentally sustainable transport system in urban scape maybe build an example for its suitability. However, battery power, solar power, clean geography bus, electric bus, railways and even tramways can be a good option. Next to assess environmental impacts, the process of evaluating the likely environmental impacts of a proposed project on development taking into account inter-related socio-economic, cultural and human health impacts, both beneficial and adverse. Next, reviewing of existing policies is one of the most important things that we should do and policy reviewing which ensures that the policies are consistent and effective. The purpose of a comprehensive review is to take an in-depth look at the existing administrative policies, first, to determine if a policy is still needed or if it should be combined with another administrative policy, determine if the purpose and goal of the policy is still being met, determine if changes are required to improve the effectiveness, clarity and procedures, to ensure the appropriate agitation, monitoring and on-going reviewing of the policy is occurring. And above all it should be kept in mind that I don't think there is any country which is which actually takes up the people, grass root people, where actually policy is making ways and procedures. So this has to be taken into consideration that while we're making any kind of policies, it should help the grass root level people and not for making policies only. And last are new human rights for sustainable living. Making the connection between human rights and sustainable living, we have right to healthy environment, role of people, access to environment information, and public participation in decision making, right to promote and defend the protection of environmental human rights, and environmental justice. I think this is high time that we should think something new as our future generations might not have the natural resources that we are wasting. Lastly I want to conclude by saying that we have to understand that geographically, latitudinally, longitudinally, we are not increasing. However our cities are increasing and we're expanding horizontally, as well as vertically. And we're putting lots of pressure on the land which might

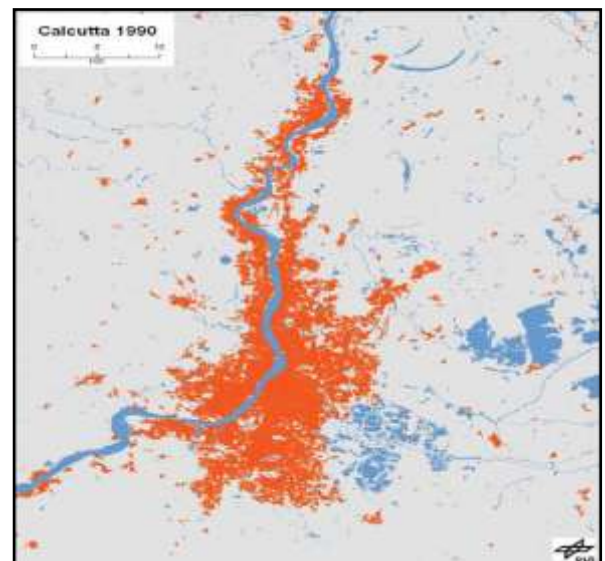
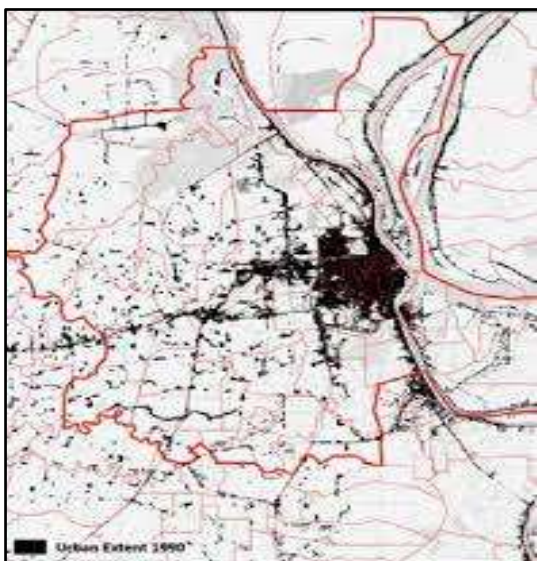
cause flood or earthquakes. So we have to be very careful at this point of time and if comparing Phnom Penh and Kolkata I would say that they both have many problems, except for these ports, there are many other problems but I would say these are the most important problems right now and also Kolkata is a bit more smarter than Phnom Penh, because it's acting fast, and it's acting in a more greener way.

Thank you.

CITIES



CITY MAPS



Earth Observation for Sustainable Development (EO4SD), 2017.





INFLUENCE OF MUGHALS AND ITS ASSOCIATED ROYAL COURTS ON GAUDIYA VAISHNAVA DOCTRINE AND SECT

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My sincere regard to the Chair and Professor Lipi Ghosh for invitation and the seminar session and my respected dignitaries, my subject topic is written in the brochure and now I'm coming to my lecture which I have to make it short for the time constraint. You know, Sri Chaitanya have lived his last life in Nilachal but returning from South India he tried to go to Vrindavan in every year. There were so many reasons, from the part of Sarbabhoumo and Ramananda and also from Sanatan Goswami which compelled Mahaprabhu to cancel his Vrindavan visit until the 6th year of his Sanyas that means 1515 and he was then 30 years old. Vrindavan, adjacent to Delhi and Agra, would attract royal surveillance that fact is not too astonishing. But the Lord himself was indifferent to the thought of royal proximity. He wanted to be presented in Vrindavan for his emotion, and the secondary cause was to reopen the Luptatirthas at the hidden secret places as mentioned in Bhagabat Puran. After the Lord's return to Prayag from Vrindavan, the Chaitanyaite Goswamins started their ascetic activities according to Lord's order. But now, there is a long history of relationship between Mughal court and Vrindavan, between the time period after Chaitanya and before the fall of Aurangzeb. Mohanta's finest observation in Braja is the demarcation of Radhakunda in Braja area. But Chaitanya had assigned Rup and Sanatana to perform the religious duty to unveil the Ramya Vrindavana as described in Bhagabat. Rebuilding of Vrindavan was done by the forceful wish of the Lord himself and it was by the continuous effort of Rup and Sanatana, after also it was used by the royal well-wishers. In this period, when Rup and Sanatana were engaged in Vrindavan, in this period, a Ballabhite leader Bitthalanath managed to get 10-12 mohars per month from Akbar and became prosperous for seven generations. When Rup and Sanatana were alive, the Gauda sampradaya of Braja did not maintain any kind of relationship with Mughal court or any associated Hindu court. According to Professor Irfan Habib and Professor Tarapada Mukhopadhyay, Vrindavan came in direct contact with Mughal court on around from 1565. Sanatana departed in 1560 and Rup departed in 1561. It has been concluded by Mukherjee and Habib, Raja Biharimal of Ambar connected the Gauda sampradaya with Mughal court. The Ambar court was subordinate to Mughal court and they were Vaishnavite. They had previous connection with Mathura, and besides Raja Biharimal of

Ambar, Maharaja Todarmal, and Birbal also had prior contact with Vrindavan. They were now attracted by the Goswamins' highly elevated scholarship and their simple lifestyle. So when Akbar was throne in 1556, then Vrindavan was a simple forest. But spiritual honesty of the Goswamins had made the emperor interested in their system and there were even started for the first time in India as example of has tolerance. By the request of the Ambara king in 1565 Akbar decreed a Farman to the Sevaka of Madanmohana granting them 200 bigha of land. It is the first example in this subcontinent that a Muslim emperor is giving a land grant for the Hindu temple. By the request of Todarmal Jiba Goswami was appointed as the Adhikari of Madanmohana and Govinda temple in 1568. It is the first episode in this subcontinent where the Adhikari of a Hindu temple was selected by the Muslim emperor and there was no event of religious debate by other Hindu sects. 1598 was a very important year, not only for Vrindavan, but for Braja area in totality. Akbar decreed a Farman to constitute a committee to investigate economic conditions of Hindu temples in Brajadham. On the basis of the recommendation of the committee chaired by Abul Fazal, a total of 35 temples in Brajadham managed to get one thousand bighas of land Farman by Mughal emperor. In Vrindavan research society museum visited by me, it has been archived many famous... many Farmans and dalils which inform us the temples of vrindavan became wealthy by the Mughal grant after the period of six Goswamis. From seventeenth century the Goswamis of Vrindavan became rich landowners. From sixteenth century the most influential shrine was Madanmohan of Sanatana. Akbar recognized Madanmohan for its extreme position. He granted land to this shrine and King Todarmal also granted the same to him in 1584. Even Krishnadas Kaviraj also activated this story in his Sri Sri Chaitanyacharitamrita. It is concluded from the associated documents Sanatana resided in Dwadashaditya Tila in Vrindavan, which was a Buddhist shrine before Mahaprabhu's visit there and the Madanmohana temple there was made by a Multani businessman and on or about 1590 this Madanmohana temple had received a huge grant from Akbar. Local lore says, Akbar used to go in Braja to visit the ascetics there but there is no official documentation that can prove that Akbar had visited Braja. But we are not in a position to describe the lores now, I've written there, but King Jahangir, it may be concluded by documentation that King Jahangir had visited Vrindavan in 1690. We have to mention specially the Radhadamodar temple of Vrindavan, it was the personal shrine of Srijib Goswami because for its specialty. This temple was the first systematic manuscript library ever found in India arranged and catalogued except in Tibet. Local lore says Akbar on the request of Srijib Goswami arranged to make a library of Hindu scriptures with the help of Pundits of Baranasi in Radhadamodar temple. In 1562, the daughter of Ambar King Biharimal got married to Akbar. Biharimal became the jagirdar of

Vrindavan. King Mansingha was the grandson of Biharimal and in the second part of the Vaishnava history after the period of six Goswamis. The centre changed from Braja to Jaipur. In the year 1669 just one year before Aurangzeb's invasion to Braja Raja Jaisingh sent a messenger to the temple priest of Braja to convey the chilling news of upcoming royal wrath on Braja. The Jath king of adjoining Bharatpur had taken all the duties hide idols under the name Govindadev, Radha Gopinath and Radha Damodar which was transferred from Braja to Jaipur. About 100 years later Radha Damodar returned to Vrindavan. On or around 1710 during the reign of Jaisingh II the relationship between the Gaudiya sect and the state of Jaipur started to impede rapidly. In 1716 Swai Jaisingh dedicated the village of Bolan to the service of Radhagokulananda, the deity worshipped by Bishwanath Chakraborty, and Bishwanath Chakraborty has become now the central figure of Govinda Vaishnavites. Monica Horseman, the research scholar under Professor Tarapada Mukherjee, feels that 1713 March was the turning point in the influence of the sect in Jaipur, mentions that at Govindaji temple as the presiding deity of the royal house of Jaipur. Krishnadeva Sarbabhouma Bhattacharya, a disciple of Bishwanath was officially the Mohanta of Radhavinodji and this temple after what it will be replaced by Sitaram by the Ramanandis in Jaipur and that Krishnadeva became the advisor of Jaising II. Krishnadeva was a Bengali Brahmin, and wrote three bibritis on Karmamarga, Gyanamarga and Bhaktimarga to explain the three important aspects of Gaudiya Vaishnava sects. Raja Jaisingh II, though he was not Gaudiya Vaishnavite in Mantra initiation, but he was keen to know the connection of Karma and Gyan with Bhakti as under his royal service. In 1723, Krishnadeva composed a very important commissioned work by Maharaja and it was Siddhantakriyaprakashika hold unity among the rival sects of Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Maharaja even asked Bhattacharya to integrate the Prema-Bhakti with Karmayoga for royal persons. Dr. Adrian P. Burton of Melbourne University had quoted his answer of Krishnadeva, Krishnadeva's answer from the archive of Maharaja Mansingh Museum. The answer was a very diplomatic response with a particular stance of assimilation of Bhagabat and Gita, and as it was done in the commentary of Bhagabatgita of Bishwanath himself. Dr. Burton has shown King Jaisingh II in 1719 and 1735 had sent Krishnadev to Bengal even to canvas the opinion of Gaudiya sect on controversial topics. He was trying to establish some kind of religious and moral consensus and sent his ambassador Krishnadeva to the court of Various Maharajas. The Gaudiya Vaishnavas present in Murshidabad court refused Jaisingh's proposal for consensus but in 1732 a royal assembly was held in Swai Jaisingh's court, on Nirupa Goswami's teachings Krishnadeva was cited in this assembly as an authority like Rup-Sanatana and Jiva. Another famous disciple of Bishwanath Chakraborty was Baladeva Bidyabhushan. Without Baladeva's name no history of Gaudiya Vaishnava

religion of Bengal can be fulfilled. Baladeva was Maadhya Vaishnava, before he was initiated by Bishwanath Chakraborty in Gaudiya system. Baladeva was consulted by the King Jaisingh II and King Madhavsingh for several times. There are so many letters written by King and by the ministers of the King to Baladeva and answers from Baladeva were archived in the Jaisingh meuseum. Baladeva Bidyabhushan had gone to Jaipur after the massacre done by Aurangzeb in Braja in 1749 holi and he was received by Maharaja Madhavsingh in Jaipur and established a new Shyamsundar shrine in Jaipur and got there the order to write a Brahmasutrashya, which was the last compendium of the Gaudiya thoughts. And this is the history of Mughal court and Jaipur court which had made the scholars of Vaishnava thought to organize a Vaishnava theology which was taken by the Nabadwip circle at least 50 years later.

Thank you.

BENGAL THE CHOSEN DESTINATION FOR THE TAMILS

Sampath Kumar, Chairman

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নমস্কার। As a part of Bengal Interface India, I would be speaking on the topic, 'Bengal the Chosen Destination for the Tamils,' but I also would prefer to affix a question mark for the topic, which is something that I intend to explain.

India is a fabulous composition of various cultures. Culture is the way of life of a particular group of people, especially as shown in their normal behaviour and habits, their attitudes towards each other and their moral and religious beliefs. Tamils certainly are a distinct group of the varied composite of Bengal with a markedly different culture.

Culture comprises of arts, music, theatre, literature and trade. But before moving on to these, I'll talk about the Dravidian civilization which the Tamils consist of, which perhaps is the oldest civilization in India. The first Sangam sites, purportedly 4400 years old, were believed to be consumed by the sea, which could make it older than the Aryan race. Dravidian culture differed from the Aryan civilization from the looks, language, food and culture.

Thirukkural, a composition of couplets is 2 millennia old and has been translated into 82 languages. The earliest Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions were found in Adichannalur burial urns, believed to be 3800 years old. Tolkappiyam, a Sangam era literature between 5 BCE and 3 CE is rich grammatically, which gives the right to the argument that the evolution of the scripted language could have been much earlier. Sangam era offers many more literary treasures.

As we know the Bengali language followed Brahmi for long and that the evolution Bengali scripted language was much younger, about 300 years old, and the evolution of the English language, on the other hand, was about 600 years old.

And as far as religion is concerned, the earlier worship of the female deities was widespread, Shakti worship coming into Tamil Nadu long before Shiva, and Murugan (Kartik). Vaishnavism originated in Andhra Pradesh, then a part of Tamil Nadu, where Ramanuja founded the faith.

Tamils were great sea-farers and traded with Rome and most of South-East Asia. Tamils moored their ships and went to the Roman shores on Catamarans, the word Catamaran

and Riso for Rice (Arisi in Tamil) entering their vocabulary. Tamils also were advanced in engineering, architecture and social engagement.

There is a mention of a Tamil princess being married off to an Italian prince, creating a deeper bond between two nations. Agriculture was very rampant and very advanced, and so was architecture and Engineering. The Brihadeeswara Temple, Gopuram tower is 66 meters high and with an 80 ton single stone on top of the head, where no such stone was available anywhere around 100 kilometers around the temple area. This shows the architectural feat that Tamils could achieve a thousand years ago.



A bridge called Kallannai, built by Karikalan Chola 2000 years ago, over Kaveri to divert and control the flow of water is still operative and one of a scientific marvel. (In the picture, as in operation now)



It was precisely a thousand years ago, in 1019 CE, Rajendra Chola's army after defeating Indaratha of Kalinga, defeated Mahipala in Bengal. They also defeated Dharmapala of Dandabhukti. The Chola army then defeated Govinda Chandra and invaded the Bastar region. The territories held the status of tribute paying subordinates and trade partners with the Chola Kingdom, an arrangement that lasted till the times of Kulothunga III. A portion of the large Chola army was left behind in Bengal to train the local soldiers in warfare techniques. The first integration of Tamil and Bengali cultures could have emanated from the stationed army.

The Dravidian culture was barely known beyond the Vindhyas despite their valour and conquests. Tamil Kings brought much of South-East Asia under their administrative control and also spread Hinduism and Hindu Gods like Ganesha. Ramayana and Mahabharata are epics adopted by most South-East Asian Countries with their own regional modifications.

Tamils were greatly influenced by Chaitanya, who travelled to many shrines like Tirupati, Kanchipuram, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, etc., of his six disciples and one of his was from Tamil Nadu.

The earliest migration of Tamils could have been in the middle of 17th Century, on the invitation of the king of Panchkot Raj, Gour Narayan, when many Tamil Iyengar (Vaishnava) families came and settled to perform at the Keshabjew temple. Many neighbouring kingdoms too converted to Vaishnavism. The descendants of the families still perform as Sebaites in the Keshabjew temple in Godibero.

The other significant arrival was the Chettiars, a trading community of Tamil Nadu, who earlier even sailed with Chola Kings to establish trade in South East Asia. The Chettiars arrived in Calcutta, borrowed from the Marwari money lenders and lent at a higher interest. The British conquered Burma in 1826 and invited Chettiars to finance the Burmese. Chettiars set up a trading post and built a temple in Kolkata.

Then came Tamil Muslims from Keezakarai, the lower bank of Tamil Nadu. They were traders who did business with Bengal for long. They sold conches for the bangle makers in Birbhum and 'attar' to the babus around Bow Bazar. The Tamil Muslims are involved with hide, horn and bone trade. Later they set up shops selling Lungis and Mossal or Shisha for the hookah.

Bengal excelled in hospitality and attracted talented and educated Tamils. Many Tamils worked in the Calcutta University like Anantakrishna Shastri (1917-1947), Dr. Sir C. V. Raman, the Nobel Laureate, Dr. K.S. Krishnan FRS, Physicist. Given the contribution of the Tamils, Calcutta University has set up a Tamil Chair.

There were a few other Tamils like Sir Sharma, Ramaswamy Srinivasa Sharma, who, the only one knighted by 1938 by King Edward VIII. He became the editor of Surendranath Banerjee's magazine called Bengali.

Expansion of Bengal Nagpur Railway to Kharagpur and then to Howrah saw many Tamils arriving at Bengal. Many settled in Ramakrishnapur, Howrah. Early Tamils, mostly Brahmins, and employed in the English companies initially lived in Central Calcutta, moving Southwards to Bhowanipore and then to Lake Market area, which was the Tamil centre for more than fifty years. As the then capital of British India, Bengal offered the scope of employment for the English-speaking Tamils. The reformist movement in Tamil Nadu, which became Brahmin bashing, results in a large-scale influx of Tamil Brahmins to Kolkata. The liberal attitude of Bengalis accepting all alien cultures and people suited the peaceful nature of Tamils. The high standards of education and research further helped them to bring their families and settle down in Bengal.

Many Tamils now live in Brahmapur and Behala. Despite their intrinsic and unique culture, Tamils could integrate well in host cultures. Tamils introduced much beyond their food, dosa and idly. Tamil footballers like Peter Thangaraj, Arumainayakam and P. Kannan were famous during their times.

The exodus of the peace-loving Tamils began in the 70's during the Naxalite movement and the industrial decline. From a once peak of 3 lacs Tamils in Bengal, now less

than 20 thousand live in Bengal (Census of 2011). Delhi and Mumbai still boast of a healthy population of Tamils, unlike in Kolkata. Globalization has opened the doors of Tamil youth, who prefer to work abroad.

The uniqueness of Bengal for the Tamils cannot be equated with any other place in India. I wish the industrial resurgence of Bengal takes place the soonest to attract Tamils like before to add to the charming cosmopolitan flavour of West Bengal.

Thank You!

চান্দ্র ও সৌর সংস্কৃতির প্রেক্ষিতে বাংলা এবং অসমের জনসমাজ :

একটি তুলনামূলক বিশ্লেষণ

অমলেন্দু চক্রবর্তী, উপাচার্য

রবীন্দ্রনাথ টেগোর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, হোজাই, অসম

বাংলা এবং অসম ভারতের দুটি প্রতিবেশী প্রদেশ। তাই অসম এবং বাংলা উভয় অঞ্চলের জনজীবনের মধ্যে অন্যান্য প্রদেশের সঙ্গে তুলনায় সাদৃশ্য লক্ষ্য করার মতো। ভাষার দিক থেকেও অসমিয়া এবং বাংলা একই উৎস-জাত, অর্থাৎ পূর্বী-মাগধীরই অন্যতম দুটি শাখা হল এই দুই ভাষা। এছাড়াও শারীরিক গঠন এবং খাদ্যাভ্যাসের ক্ষেত্রেও আমাদের সাদৃশ্য অন্যদের চেয়ে বেশি। এর একটি অন্যতম কারণ হল, যদিও আর্য-উপনিবেশ বাংলার চেয়ে অসমে আগেই গড়ে উঠেছিল বলে অনেকেই মন্তব্য করেছেন, তবে একথাও ঠিক যে বঙ্গদেশ থেকে অনেক বাঙালি বিভিন্ন সময়ে অসমে গিয়ে বসবাস করেছেন এবং অসমিয়া জাতিতে রূপান্তরিত হয়েছেন। অসমের প্রখ্যাত ব্যক্তিত্ব আনন্দরাম বরুয়া থেকে হেডস্ব বরপূজারী প্রমুখ অনেকেরই পূর্বপুরুষ নবদ্বীপ থেকে অসমে গিয়েছিলেন। তবে এই আপাত সাদৃশ্য নয়, আমরা দেখাতে চাইছি, এই উভয় প্রদেশের জনজীবনে কিছু লক্ষণীয় সাংস্কৃতিক পার্থক্যও বর্তমান। এর মূলে রয়েছে সৌর (Solar) এবং চান্দ্র (Lunar) সংস্কৃতিতে বিশ্বাসী দুই অঞ্চলের চিন্তাধারার পার্থক্য। আমরা এই দুই সংস্কৃতি সম্পর্কে আলোকপাত করতে চাইছি।

আমরা মানবেতিহাসের সূচনা লগ্ন থেকেই দু'ধরনের জনগোষ্ঠীর সাক্ষাৎ পেয়ে এসেছি। একদল শস্যের উৎপাদক (food producers), এঁরা কায়িক শ্রমের বিনিময়ে জীবিকা নির্বাহ করেন। পশুপালন, কৃষিকাজ ইত্যাদি ছিল তাঁদের জীবনধারণের অন্যতম অবলম্বন। রবীন্দ্রনাথ তাঁর 'রক্তকরবী' নাটকের পটভূমি প্রসঙ্গে এঁদের বলেছেন 'কর্ষণজীবী'।¹ অন্য আর এক-গোষ্ঠী আছেন যাঁরা কায়িকশ্রমের পরিবর্তে

বাহুবলকেই পাথেয় করে খাদ্য সংগ্রহ করে থাকেন। এঁরা শস্যের সংগ্রাহক (food gatherer)। রবীন্দ্রনাথের ভাষায় এঁরা আকর্ষণজীবী, এঁরা “শক্তিবাহুল্যের যোগেই গ্রহণ করেন, গ্রাস করেন...”² ফলে এঁরা হয়ে উঠেছেন ক্ষমতার পূজারি এবং যথার্থ অর্থেই শোষণজীবী বা শক্তিজীবী সম্প্রদায়। এভাবে মানব সভ্যতার বিকাশে প্রায় সর্বত্রই গড়ে উঠেছে দুটি সম্প্রদায়। একদল শ্রমজীবী, নিরীহ, গণতন্ত্রে বিশ্বাসী; অপরদল বাহুবলের উপাসক, গণতন্ত্র বিরোধী, এঁরা লাঙল স্পর্শ করেন না, তলোয়ারের বাঁটে তাঁদের হাত। প্রখ্যাত মনীষী রুডলফ রকার (Rudolf Rocker)-এর সংস্কৃতি এবং জাতিবাদের প্রসঙ্গে কৃত একটি মন্তব্যের সারসংক্ষেপ এখানে উদ্ধৃত করতে পারি। তাঁর মতে মানুষের ইতিহাসে উষালগ্ন থেকেই দুটি বিরোধী প্রবণতার সংগ্রাম দেখা যায়, “সম্পদের উৎপাদন বনাম ক্ষমতার পূজা, মুক্তির স্পৃহা বনাম শক্তির লালসা, সমবায়ী চেতনা বনাম যুগবৃত্তি, সংস্কৃতি বনাম রাজনীতি ও ধর্ম।”³ একচ্ছত্র অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠার প্রবণতাই হচ্ছে ক্ষমতার ধর্ম। এই প্রবণতা থেকেই পুরোহিত সম্প্রদায় ও রাষ্ট্রশক্তির উদ্ভব। উল্লেখ্য, এঁরা হচ্ছেন শিকারজীবী বা দমনজীবী সম্প্রদায়ের প্রতিভূ।

যাঁরা পশুপালক বা কৃষিজীবী সম্প্রদায় তাঁরা পশুপালন এবং কৃষিকর্মের সুবিধার জন্যই অনিবার্যভাবে সূর্যের ওপর নির্ভরশীল ছিলেন। কেননা সূর্য ছিল জলবায়ুর নিয়ন্তা। অতিবৃষ্টি এবং অনাবৃষ্টি দুইই ছিল পশুপালন তথা ফসল উৎপাদনের পক্ষে প্রধান প্রতিবন্ধক। ঋতুপরিবর্তনের ক্ষেত্রেও প্রধান ভূমিকা ছিল সূর্যেরই। তাই কৃষিপ্রধান অঞ্চলের ধর্মভাবনা সূর্যের দ্বারা প্রভাবিত হয়েছিল প্রবলভাবে। অপরদিকে যেসব অঞ্চল কৃষিকার্যের পক্ষে ছিল অনুপযোগী অথবা যে জনগোষ্ঠী ছিল কৃষিকার্য বিমুখ অথবা পশুপালনের বিপরীতে পশুশিকারে অভ্যস্ত, সেই শস্য-সংগ্রাহক শিকারজীবীদের ধর্মীয় ভাবনা মূর্ত হয়ে উঠেছিল চন্দ্রকে কেন্দ্র করেই।

সূর্য এবং চন্দ্রকে কেন্দ্র করে প্রাচীন জনগোষ্ঠীর যে ধর্মভাবনা ক্রমে অবয়ব স্ব লাভ করেছিল তা-ই সভ্যতার বিবর্তনের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে উৎকর্ষ লাভ করে তার দৈনন্দিন আচার আচরণ, স্বভাব-প্রকৃতি, আত্মভাব, শিল্পভাবনার সূচক হয়ে সাংস্কৃতিক রূপ লাভ করেছিল। এভাবেই সৌর সংস্কৃতি এবং চান্দ্র সংস্কৃতির সূত্রপাত হয়েছিল।

সূর্য এবং চন্দ্রকে কেন্দ্রে রেখে সংস্কৃতির যে সমান্তরাল ধারা গড়ে উঠেছিল তার প্রভাব পড়েছিল সেই বিশেষ সংস্কৃতিকেন্দ্রিক জনগোষ্ঠীর কালগণনার পদ্ধতির মধ্যেও। ভারতবর্ষেও এর ব্যতিক্রম আমরা লক্ষ করিনি, বিশেষ করে কৃষিকে কেন্দ্র করে এখানেও কালগণনা তথা ঋতু বিভাজনের প্রক্রিয়া শুরু হয়েছিল। “In ancient agricultural societies, apart from agricultural technology, another factor of some consequence would be the knowledge of the calendar. It is thought that the earliest calendar used in India was the lunar calendar. Yet the solar calendar was more efficient in its application to agriculture and astronomy.” বেদেও আমরা সূর্যকে কেন্দ্র রেখে কালগণনার প্রাধান্য লক্ষ করেছি। সূর্যের গতির দ্বারা পরিমিত কাল অনুযায়ী; ৩৬৫ $\frac{1}{4}$ দিনে ১২ মাসে এক বৎসর গণনা করা হয়। ষড় ঋতুভেদ সৌর বর্ষের একটি অন্যতম বৈশিষ্ট্য। অপরদিকে এক অমাবস্যার পর থেকে পরবর্তী অমাবস্যা পর্যন্ত গণিত মাস অনুযায়ী নির্ধারিত বর্ষকে বলা হয়েছে চান্দ্রবর্ষ। ‘সূর্যসিদ্ধান্ত’ গ্রন্থে বলা হয়েছে, “ত্রিংশতা তিথিভির্মাসচান্দ্রঃ”, অর্থাৎ, ত্রিশ তিথিতে গণিত মাস;^৪ এতে ২৯.৫৪ দিনে এক মাস হয়ে থাকে। ফলত ৩৫৪ দিনে এক বৎসর গণনা করা হয়। চান্দ্র বর্ষের সঙ্গে সৌর-বর্ষের ১১ থেকে ১২ দিনের তফাৎ লক্ষ করা যায়। ঋতু পরিবর্তনের সঙ্গে চান্দ্রবর্ষের কোনো সম্পর্ক নেই।

ভারতবর্ষে প্রথম বর্ষগণনার নিয়ম তৈরি হয়েছে বৈদিক যুগে ‘বেদাঙ্গ জ্যোতিষ’-কে অবলম্বন করে। সেটিও ছিল সৌর বর্ষ। তবে উল্লেখ্য, চান্দ্র বর্ষ সম্পর্কেও বৈদিক ঋষিরা জ্ঞাত ছিলেন। শুধু তাই নয়, বর্ষ গণনার উভয় পদ্ধতির

মধ্যে ঐক্য-বিধান-প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কেও তাঁরা সচেতন ছিলেন। বর্তমানে ভারতবর্ষে যে বর্ষগণনা পদ্ধতি প্রচলিত তাকে সচন্দ্রসৌর (Luni-solar) পদ্ধতি বলা চলে।

সূর্য এবং চন্দ্রকে কেন্দ্র করে কাল গণনার এই দুই পদ্ধতি যাঁরা অনুসরণ করেছিলেন তাঁদের মধ্যে সংঘাত সভ্যতার গোড়া থেকেই লক্ষ করা গিয়েছিল। বার্ট্রান্ড রাসেলের প্রবন্ধ থেকে ঐতিহাসিক এই তথ্যকে আমরা এখানে উপস্থাপিত করতে পারি : “There has been a curious conflict ... between lunar and solar priesthoods and lunar and solar calendars. The calendar has at all times played an important part in religion... the very inaccurate lunar calendars were everywhere advocated by priests devoted to the worship of the moon, and the victory of the solar calendar was slow and partial.”⁵

আমরা আগেই উল্লেখ করেছি, যাঁরা শ্রমবিমুখ, অন্যের শ্রমের ওপর নির্ভরশীল, সেই পরান্নজীবী সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্য থেকেই পুরোহিত সম্প্রদায়ের আবির্ভাব এবং রাষ্ট্রশক্তির উদ্ভব হয়েছিল। এই শোষণজীবীরাই চন্দ্রকে কেন্দ্র করে গঠিত ভ্রমাত্মক কালগণনার পদ্ধতির (বার্ট্রান্ড রাসেলের ভাষায় ‘very inaccurate lunar calendar’) সমর্থক ছিলেন। এই তথ্য রাসেলের আলোচনায় প্রতিফলিত হয়েছে। অপরদিকে যাঁরা ফসলের উৎপাদক, কৃষিজীবী সম্প্রদায় তাঁদের দ্বারা কালগণনার সৌরপদ্ধতিই গৃহীত হয়েছিল। বার্ট্রান্ড রাসেলও বিশ্ব-ইতিহাসের পটভূমিতে স্বীকার করেছেন, “... the victory of the sun worshippers, wherever it occurred, was due to the patent fact that the sun has more influence than the moon over the crops.”⁶

এই সংঘাত সৌর বনাম চান্দ্র সংস্কৃতির, কৃষিজীবীদের সঙ্গে শোষণজীবীদের, শস্য-উৎপাদকের সঙ্গে শস্য-সংগ্রাহকদের সংঘাত। ভারতবর্ষে আর্য সভ্যতার সূচনা লগ্ন থেকেই এই সংঘাত দানা বেঁধে ছিল। বেদে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য অনুযায়ী সে যুগের অর্থনীতি মূলত নির্ভর করেছিল পশুপালন এবং কৃষির ওপর। এ প্রসঙ্গে ‘The Discovery of India’ নামক গ্রন্থে জওহরলাল নেহেরু ‘আর্য’ শব্দটি কৃষিবাচক বলে মন্তব্য করেছেন, “The word ‘Arya’ comes from the a root meaning to till, and the

Aryans as a whole were good agriculturists and agriculture was considered a noble profession.”⁷ বৈদিক সভ্যতা মূলত কৃষিভিত্তিক সভ্যতা বলেই আর্যদের মধ্যে সৌর সংস্কৃতি প্রাধান্য লাভ করেছিল। বস্তুত আর্যরা ছিলেন জ্যোতির সম্ভান, আলোকের অগ্রদূত – ‘জ্যোতিরগ্রা’, (ঋগ্বেদ-৭/১৩/৭)। সূর্য তাই আর্যচেতনার প্রতীক হয়ে দেখা দিয়েছে। কাত্যায়ন বলেছেন, বৈদিকদের একজনই দেবতা তিনি সূর্য। তাঁর মতে বেদের সকল দেবতাই সূর্যের বিভিন্ন রূপ মাত্র – “এক মহানাত্মা বেদে স্তূয়তে স সূর্য ইতি, ব্যাচক্ষতে।”^৪

কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষে আর্যভাষী সমাজের মধ্যেই সৃষ্টিজীবী তথা কৃষিজীবী সম্প্রদায়ের বিপরীতে একদল nomadic সম্প্রদায় ক্রমে ক্রমে প্রধান হয়ে উঠেছিল। শক্তিজীবী বা শোষণজীবী এই জনগোষ্ঠীর নেতৃত্ব দিয়েছিলেন ইন্দ্র। ইন্দ্র সম্পর্কে বলা হয়েছে, “Indra is a symbol of a later wave of Aryan invaders and immigrants who came into India, on one hand, and reached the middle East, on the other. It is these Aryans who put an end to the culture maturing in the Punjab.”^৯ ইন্দ্র ছিলেন মূলত যুদ্ধজীবী নর্ডিক আর্যগোষ্ঠীর নেতা, “Nordic Aryans who invaded India between 1500-1200 B.C were a nomadic war like people”.^{১০} বেদে ইন্দ্রের সঙ্গে সোম বা চন্দ্রের ঘনিষ্ঠতা লক্ষ্য করার মতো। ইন্দ্র কর্তৃক উষার শকট ভঙ্গ, সূর্য দেবতা আদিত্যের সংঘাতের ইঙ্গিত এই দুই সংস্কৃতির সংঘাতের একটি আভাস দেয়। তবে মহাকাব্য এবং পুরাণ সাহিত্যে এই সাংস্কৃতিক সংঘাত স্পষ্টরূপ ধারণ করে। বেদ-পরবর্তী যুগে আদিত্যের স্থানে ‘কৃষ্’ ধাতুজাত ‘কৃষি’, ‘কৃষক’ ইত্যাদি শব্দের সঙ্গে সামুজ্য-যুক্ত কৃষ্ এবং তাঁর সঙ্গে বিষ্ণু; অপরদিকে চান্দ্র সংস্কৃতির প্রতিভূ ইন্দ্রের স্থানে আসেন চন্দ্রশেখর শিব এবং তাঁর শক্তি পার্বত্য অঞ্চলের শিকারজীবী সম্প্রদায়ের পূজিতা পর্বতকন্যা দুর্গা ও তাঁর ভিন্ন ভিন্ন প্রকাশরূপে আবির্ভূত শক্তিদেবীরা। অতঃপর বেদে যে সংঘাতের সূচনা হয়েছিল তারই বিবর্তিত রূপ আমরা লক্ষ্য করলাম পরবর্তীকালে কৃষি এবং সূর্যকেন্দ্রিক বিষ্ণু-কৃষ্ বনাম

যাদুমুখী কৃষিবিরোধী চন্দ্রকেন্দ্রিক শিব-শক্তির মধ্যে। একদিকে গণতন্ত্রে বিশ্বাসী কৃষিজীবী শূদ্র-বৈশ্য ক্ষত্রিয়, অন্যদিকে সামন্তপ্রভু এবং পুরোহিত ব্রাহ্মণের দল; শিব এবং শক্তিই ছিল তাঁদের একমাত্র আরাধ্য। “The underlying struggle is known to have been between the great feudal landlords who worshipped Siva and his consort goddess as against the smaller but more enterprising entrepreneurs who opted for Krishna or Vishnu-Narayana.”¹¹ এ সম্পর্কে আরও বলা হয়েছে, “Siva had then become the god of the great barons, whereas the cowherd boy Krishna remained associated with small producers.”¹² একনায়কত্ববাদী বৈদিক ইন্দ্রের যথার্থ উত্তরাধিকারী সামন্তপ্রভু এবং কায়িকশ্রমবিরোধী ব্রাহ্মণ্যবাদীরা তাঁদের আদর্শের মিল খুঁজে পেয়েছিলেন ভীতিপ্রদ শিব তথা ভয়ঙ্করী শক্তিদেবীদের মধ্যে। কেননা, “...Siva has a rather ferocious and dangerous side of his character. Vishnu is generally thought of as wholly benevolent. The god works continuously for the welfare of the world.”¹³

অসম এবং বঙ্গ – এই উভয় অঞ্চলের জনজীবন তথা সংস্কৃতির মধ্যে তুলনা প্রসঙ্গে এই সাংস্কৃতিক সংঘাতের প্রসঙ্গ অবশ্যই উল্লেখ করা প্রয়োজন। কেন না, যদিও এই দুই অঞ্চলেরই অন্যতম জীবিকা হচ্ছে কৃষি, তবু-সাংস্কৃতিক দিক থেকে উভয় অঞ্চলের মধ্যে ব্যবধান ক্রমাগত স্পষ্ট হয়ে উঠেছে। বঙ্গদেশে বল্লাল সেনের রাজত্বকাল থেকে রঘুনন্দনের স্মৃতিশাস্ত্রের হাত ধরে ব্রাহ্মণ্যতন্ত্রের আধিপত্য বিস্তার এবং পরবর্তীকালে সামন্ততন্ত্রের প্রতিষ্ঠার ফলে বাংলায় চান্দ্র সংস্কৃতির প্রসার ঘটে। মধ্যযুগে বাংলায় যখন মুসলমান শাসন প্রতিষ্ঠিত হল, তখন নবাব, বিশেষ করে মোগল যুগে, বসে থাকতেন দিল্লিতে এবং খাজনা আদায়ের দায়িত্ব দেওয়া হত অধস্তন কর্মচারীদের ওপর। ফলে সাধারণের ওপর যে অত্যাচার সেদিন তাঁদের ভিটেহীন করেছিল তার বর্ণনা মুকুন্দ চক্রবর্তীর চন্দ্রীমঙ্গল কাব্যে বর্তমান।

স্কন্দপুরাণের নাগরখন্ডে (৬/২৭/৯৬) স্পষ্টত নির্দেশ-দেওয়া হয়েছিল, কলিযুগে রাজারা চাষীদের পীড়ন করবেন (‘ভূপালাঃ পীড়ায়িম্যন্তি কষকান্’) – এই নির্দেশের

বাস্তব রূপ মধ্যযুগের বাংলায় লক্ষ করা গেছে। তারই অকৃত্রিম বর্ণনা আমরা মুকুন্দ চক্রবর্তীর চন্দীমঙ্গলের আখ্যটিক খন্ডে পেয়েছি। চন্দীর প্রসাদে সদ্যবৃত্ত ভূপতি ব্যাধ কালকেতুকে উপযাচক হয়ে ভাড়া দত্ত উপদেশ দিয়েছে,

‘যখন পাকিবে খন্দ পাতিবে বিষম দ্বন্দ্ব

দরিদ্রের ধান্যে দিবে নাগা।’

ফলে এই হতদরিদ্র যারা সেদিন সামন্ততন্ত্রের নির্মম যুপকার্ঠে আত্মসমর্পণ করেছিল, যারা ছিল শাসিত, শোষিত, এক কথায় শক্তির অধীন তারাই সেদিন বঙ্গদেশে শক্তিপূজায় মেতে উঠেছিল। রবীন্দ্রনাথ যথার্থই লিখেছেন, “যাদের অন্ন নেই, বস্ত্র নেই, আশ্রয় নেই, সম্মান নেই, সেই হতভাগাদের স্বপ্নের থেকে” ¹⁴ – এই শক্তিপূজার সূচনা হয়েছিল। আবার অপরদিকে, “চন্দীশক্তিকে প্রসন্ন করে তাকে নিজের ব্যক্তিগত ইষ্টলাভের অনুকূল করা তখন অন্তত এক শ্রেণীর ধর্মসাধনার প্রধান অঙ্গ ছিল, তখনকার ধনীমানীরাই বিশেষত এই শ্রেণীভুক্ত ছিল, কেননা তখনকার শক্তির ঝড় তাদের উচ্চচূড়ার উপরেই বিশেষ রূপে আঘাত করত।” ¹⁵

তাই বাংলায় শক্তিপূজা সেদিন উচ্চনীচ নির্বিশেষে জনমানসে কার্ল মার্ক্স কথিত আফিমের মতোই কাজ করেছিল। ফলে বাংলার জনজীবনে ব্রাহ্মণ-পুরোহিত এবং সামন্ততন্ত্রের হাত ধরে চান্দ্র সংস্কৃতি তথা ধর্মীয় আচার অনুষ্ঠানে কালগণনার চান্দ্রপদ্ধতি প্রাধান্য পেল। এরই ফলশ্রুতিতে জাতিভেদ, অস্পৃশ্য-প্রথা, নারীর অবনমন ইত্যাদি বাংলায় চরমতা লাভ করল। সৌর-দেবতা, কৃষ্ণ-বিষ্ণু-কেন্দ্রিক চৈতন্যের ভক্তি আন্দোলন বাংলাদেশে ব্যর্থতায় পর্যবসিত হয়েছিল। এখানেও চৈতন্যের সমসাময়িক কালে এই দুই সংস্কৃতির সংঘাত স্পষ্ট হয়ে উঠেছিল। “It is a singular fact that while the teaching of Chaitanya has united almost all the artisan and agricultural castes in a common faith, the three highest and most intelligent castes in Bengal adhere as a rule to the Sakta ritual.” ¹⁶ ফলে চৈতন্য আনীত আন্দোলন বাংলায় সার্থকতা লাভ করেনি। কেননা, “বহু তান্ত্রিক ব্রাহ্মণ

সাংসারিক উন্নতিবিধনের জন্য ‘সভায়’ বৈষ্ণব সাজেন। তাঁরা ছিলেন অন্তরে শাক্ত, বাইরে শৈব, এবং সভায় বৈষ্ণব ।”¹⁷ এ প্রসঙ্গে রমাকান্ত চক্রবর্তী মহাশয় যোগেন্দ্রনাথ ভট্টাচার্যের একটি মন্তব্য উদ্ধৃত করেছেন, “ These so-called Gossains are not recognized as such in any authoritative work of the sect, and in fact they are Shakta Brahmins partially converted to the Chaitanite faith on accounts of its lucrateness, but yet conducting themselves now and then as Shakti worshippers...”¹⁸

এই সমস্ত পুরোহিত ব্রাহ্মণরাই জাতিভেদকে সজীব রাখতে প্রয়াসী হয়েছিলেন এবং রাগানুগা সাধনতত্ত্বে বিভিন্ন বিধিমাগীয়া আচারের অনুপ্রবেশ ঘটিয়েছিলেন।

অসমে কিন্তু বাংলার মতো চান্দ্র সংস্কৃতি প্রধান হয়ে উঠতে পারল না। যদিও ভারতের অন্যতম তান্ত্রিক পীঠস্থান কামাখ্যা অসমেই অবস্থিত, তবু অসমের জনসাধারণের সিংহভাগের মধ্যে শাক্ত ধর্মীয় ভাবনা স্থান করে নিতে পারেনি। তার কারণ হল, ধুবড়ি এবং গোয়ালপাড়া জেলা বাদ দিলে অসমে সামন্ততন্ত্র প্রাধান্য পায়নি। ফলে অসমে কৃষক সম্প্রদায় এখনও সমাজে সসম্মানে অধিষ্ঠিত। বাংলায় যেমন ‘চাষা’ শব্দটি গালিতে পরিণত হয়েছে (চাষার চাষা), অসমে তা হয়নি। ফলে কৃষি-সম্পর্কিত অনুষ্ঠান অসমের জাতীয় উৎসবে পরিণত হয়েছে । অসমের জাতীয় উৎসব বিহ (বিশুব) কৃষির সঙ্গে জড়িত এবং কালগণনার সৌর-পদ্ধতি অনুযায়ী অর্থাৎ বিশুব সংক্রান্তিতে পালিত হয়। অপরদিকে নবান্ন এক সময় বাংলার অন্যতম উৎসব ছিল বলে তারাক্ষর বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় উল্লেখ করেছেন, আজ কিন্তু বাংলার জাতীয় উৎসব হচ্ছে দুর্গাপূজা এবং তা সপ্তমী, অষ্টমী, নবমী অর্থাৎ চান্দ্র মাস অবলম্বনে পালিত হয়। ফলে বিশ্বকর্মা (ঋগ্বেদে তিনি সূর্য বলেই উল্লেখিত) পূজা, নববর্ষ ইত্যাদি যেমন সৌর মাস অবলম্বনে পালিত হয় বলে প্রতি বৎসর প্রায় একই তারিখ অনুসরণ করা হয়। দুর্গাপূজা, কালীপূজা কিন্তু কখনও একই

তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত হয় না। প্রতি বৎসর ১১ থেকে ১২ দিনের পার্থক্য লক্ষ করা যায়। আমরা আগেই উল্লেখ করেছি চান্দ্র বৎসর ৩৫৪ দিনে গণনা করা হয়।

এই উভয় সংস্কৃতির প্রভাব জনজীবনেও লক্ষ করা যায়। কৃষিভিত্তিক সমাজ বলেই নারীর সম্মান বাংলার চেয়ে অসমে বেশি। বাংলায় স্ত্রীলোক ‘বাপের বাড়ি’ বেড়াতে যায়; অসমে কিন্তু ‘মায়ের বাড়িতে’। যেমন বাঙালি স্বামীকে ‘স্ত্রী কোথায়?’ জিজ্ঞাসা করলে বলেন, ‘বাপের বাড়ি গেছেন’; অপরদিকে অসমে স্বামী বলবেন, ‘মায়ের বাড়ি গেছেন’। অনেকে মনে করেন এটি মাতৃতান্ত্রিক সমাজের উদাহরণ। আসলে তা নয়, কৃষিভিত্তিক বলেই পুরুষতান্ত্রিক হওয়া সত্ত্বেও ঋগ্বেদে নারী পুরুষের সঙ্গে সমান অধিকার পেয়েছে। আমরা অনেক নারী-ঋষির নাম পেয়েছি, শুনেছি গার্গী-মৈত্রেয়ীর কথা। ভারতবর্ষে গুপ্তযুগ থেকে ব্রাহ্মণ্যতন্ত্র এবং সামন্ততন্ত্রের সহায়তায় স্মৃতিশাস্ত্রের বিধান নিয়ে নারীর অবনমন শুরু হয়। এক্ষেত্রে মনুর ভূমিকা উল্লেখযোগ্য। বাংলার নারীর এই অবনমন ব্রাহ্মণ্যতন্ত্রের হাত ধরে চরমতা লাভ করেছিল।

অসমে লাল রঙের মেথলা ছাড়াও মেয়ের বিয়ে হয়; কিন্তু বাংলার শক্তিজীবী সমাজে নববধূর শাড়ি লাল হতে হবে। বাংলায় স্ত্রীর কাছে স্বামী যেমন ‘কর্তা’, শাসক জমিদারও ‘কর্তা’; কারো বাড়িতে গিয়ে জিজ্ঞেস করা হয়, ‘কর্তা বাড়িতে আছেন?’ অসমে জিজ্ঞেস করা হয়, ‘গৃহস্থ (গিরছ) বাড়িতে আছেন কি?’ অসমে দৈনন্দিন জীবনে ব্যবহৃত অনেক শব্দই ‘গো’ অথবা ‘সূর্য’ সম্পর্কিত, যেমন, দুধকে অসমিয়াতে বলা হয় ‘গাখীর’ (<গাবক্ষীর), আগুনকে বলে ‘জুই’ (<জ্যোতি) শব্দটি সূর্যের সঙ্গে যুক্ত।

বাঙালি মাত্রেই যেমন শক্তিপূজক, অসমে কিন্তু তা নয়। অসমের একটি বৃহৎ সম্প্রদায় কামাখ্যা মন্দিরে প্রবেশ করেন না। আসলে গাঙ্গেয় সভ্যতায় গঙ্গাকে কেন্দ্রে রেখে শক্তি দেবদেবী প্রধান হয়ে উঠেছিলেন, যা লৌহিত্য অর্থাৎ ব্রহ্মপুত্রকেন্দ্রিক সভ্যতায় সম্ভব হয়নি। সম্ভবত এজন্যই পৌরাণিক যুগে শাস্ত্রকাররা ঈর্ষাবশত

ব্রহ্মপুত্রকে অপবিত্র ঘোষণা করেছিলেন, ব্রহ্মপুত্র বৎসরে একদিন পবিত্র হয়। এর
মূলেও রয়েছে চান্দ্র এবং সৌর সংস্কৃতির সংঘাত। অসম এবং বাংলার জনসমাজের
সংস্কৃতি-ভিত্তিক পার্থক্য এদিক থেকেই স্পষ্ট হয়ে ওঠে।

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PRACTICING PEOPLE'S SCIENCE: BENGAL INTERFACE KERALA

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Good afternoon. I would like to thank Professor Lipi Ghosh for inviting me to this seminar. Now it's a pleasure to have Professor Sayantan Dasgupta, my childhood friend Sayantan, as chairperson of the session. We used to live in the same complex, not in the same complex but we used to live in two flats in the same building and we were also batchmates in the university, so it's my pleasure to speak in a session with chairing by Sayantan. Now I've to say my, topic of my presentation, the title of my topic is Practicing People's Science: Bengal Interface Kerala. Now the question arises, what is the meaning of the term people's science? The journey from science to people's science was initiated to remove the distance between science and the common people. When science was confined to the question papers of examinations, research works and laboratories, dominant for the experts and technological complexities, the common people generally keeps a distance from science. So the aim of the people's science is to make a close bond between science and the common people. In people's science, therefore, the adjective people's has given us a space for the thought of social consciousness and science. Now the concept of people's science has its origin both in Bengal and Kerala. If we consider the term interface as noun, which means a point where two systems, subjects, organizations etc. meet during the act, then we can say that the people's science is the point where activists of both the states meet and interact through their science organizations. If we think of interface as a verb, that means to interact with, then it can be said that the practitioners of people's science of Bengal interacted with their Keralan counterpart. That the study, this study is used to explore the interface between Kerala and Bengal in the field of practicing people's science in post-independence India which is an instance of contemporary convergence, though the people's science movement of Bengal is not a monolithic one, yet the people's science activists of Bengal irrespective of fractional differences have a respectful attitude towards the activists of Kerala. Now, let us see at the Kerala experience. The people's science movement of Kerala can be considered a model of people's science movement in India. In 1957, some of the eminent popular science writers of Kerala joined together and get shaped to an organization called *Shastra Sahitya Samiti*. Their objective was to promote popular science literature in Malayalam. As a means to popularize their idea, they started a popular science quarterly *Adhunika Shastra*, which means modern

science, but that organization could not last too long. In '62, some of the activists of the organization together with other likeminded people founded the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad. Till 1966 it functioned mainly as a forum of popular science writers and intellectuals, not having much to do with the common people. In '67 the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad, popularly known as KSSP was reorganized on an entirely different footing. The constitution was adopted in that year which emphasizes that Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad, KSSP to be a complete mass movement. Membership of the parishad was made open to any person who believed in the great role that science has to play in molding our lands. So from '67 the parishad became a forerunner of people's science movement. It was claimed that it attracted both intellectuals and the layman alike in this force. The KSSP started experimenting on a new style of work which should be highlighted. In '71, the KSSP organized an unusual kind of science campaign in connection with its annual conference. The name of the campaign was 'Jatha', that means journey or procession, that members of the KSSP, Organised 'jathas' starting from three centres - Calicut, Shoranur, and Trivandrum and the KSSP workers consisting of doctors, engineers and other eminent scientists talked to the persons on the street on topics which were till then considered to be beyond the reach of the masses. Their venture was enthusiastically received by the people of Kerala. At the same time the parishad was encouraged to launch more effective science popularization programs, starting from that, jathas became a popular feature and a permanent feature of the works of KSSP and of the science movement. The idea was to conduct classes on chosen topics on system and resources of Kerala and a new campaign was launched by KSSP. More than one and half lakh people participated in about 1500 classes. The public education program became very popular. In '75 another massive program of popular study classes based on nature, science and society was introduced. Side by side a number of magazines and books on science were published regularly in vernacular. All these publications were aimed at spreading a message on science among the people, thus strengthening them with a genuine scientific culture that formed the background to make social change. Their aim was to make science social and to make society scientific. The parishad started to publish five monthly magazines namely the Shastragathi, the Shastrakeralam, the Eureka, the Gramshastram and the Balashastram and with these a news bulletin for the members was also started in the name of the 'Parishad Barta'. In '71 the parishad started to publish books on science; emphasis was given on subjects like environment, people's health and self-dependence. In '77 a bigger journey or procession was organized in the name of 'Shastrasanskrita Jatha'. After that the parishad started action-oriented research to strengthen people's initiatives against adverse consequences of so called development projects. It did the study on ecological and socio-

economic consequences of the water control projects. The second action-oriented research was related to the causes and problems of industrial pollution in the Chaliyar River in Calicut in North Kerala. But the most famous action-oriented research that assumed national and inter-national controversy was related with the proposed hydro-electric project in the Silent Valley forest in the Western Ghat in the North of Kerala. The objections for the project began with a task force on environmental planning and coordination set up by the DST, Government of India, who had serious doubts about the reliability of the project in view of the precious nature of the flora and fauna and its importance for the preservation of ecological stability in the Western Ghats. Subsequently, ecologists, both within and outside Kerala, raised objections and shot to mobilize public opinion against the proposed project. The KSSP had pointed out the undesirability of mass destruction of valuable forest. It focused on the need of need for a proper use of energy resources and the need to stay in their existing transmission and distribution system of electric power in the state. A report prepared by KSSP concluded that it was too precious to open up the Silent Valley forest through the construction of the dam which will eventually lead to its destruction. It was said further that the Silent Valley project had no justifications on energy dams, because 40% of Kerala's power was exported to other states. The parishad remarked that the proposed project's contribution would be only 7% of the total power generation in the state, which could not solve the problem of power shortage in North Kerala. It was also pointed out in that report prepared by parishad that the possibilities of irrigating an area or 10,000 hectare in the region could be made through the exploitation of ground and surface water at much less capital investment. The parishad's stand secured support from people within and outside the state in favour of the preservation of the Silent Valley forest. However opposition came from the Kerala state electricity board and vested interest groups. Ultimately after the pressure of the people's science movement, the government was compelled to withdraw the project in 1983. The Silent Valley forest was declared as a national farm. Meanwhile KSSP started to spread the people's science movement. A number of delegations from the southern states had begun to participate in people's science movement. A convention was held in 1978 where different science activists of different states joined, and from West Bengal the Scientific Worker's Forum, West Bengal and Bikkhan joined the convention. The second convention was held in 1983. I can read what was published in EPW on this issue. I quote: "A large number of groups are working, mostly on a voluntary basis in areas which may be said to fall on the interface of science and society. Some are attempting to popularize the natural sciences, some are engaged in focusing attention on the unscientific attitudes and policies towards our basic issues as health, some are engaged in highlighting the adverse impact of development activities as a result of inadequate

and often wrong application of science and technology, particularly in the field of environment. A few are engaged in demonstrating innovative and interesting ways of teaching science, while quite a number are engaged in development activities in the areas of health, non-formal education and appropriate technology, housing etc. based on their scientific knowledge”. That is the story of Kerala.

In Bengal we also have the development of people’s science movement. Now as a translation of the people’s science, what would be the Bengali term for the people’s science? There are two terms in general used in Bengali - ‘Janavijnan’ and ‘Ganavijnan’, but their usage is quite controversial. The activists are sharply divided on the issue. A section of activists instead of using these two terms – preferred ‘Lokavijnan’. This Janavijnan term was used by the leftists who were in the power in West Bengal and the Ganavijnan term was used by the radical left. Now one of the activists of the left in power, he was of opinion that both these terms are more or less the same he said that scientific workers to belong to the idea of Ganavijnan did some good job. But some thinkers differed. One of them said that ‘Janavijnan’ is nothing but an abridged form of the ‘Janapriya Vijnan’, that means popular science, so the term itself was a point of debate. Now the important question is that what is the essential feature of this people’s science of both these Gana and Janavijnan? According to Janavijnan group, the aims of people’s science are to give the benefits of science to every people to fight against superstitions and para-sciences to make people concerned about the problems and solutions of health and promote scientific temperament among commoners – peasants, and workers and even illiterates along with the educated class. Undoubtedly, the Janavijnan movement emphasizes on science popularization, but along with this, they also organized some movements which are relevant to the socio-economic and political contexts. On some occasions it campaigns either for or against any particular project for the sake of people’s interest. For the same purpose, it acts as a pressure group to play a major role in determining the policy of government. This is evident in various environmental movements like anti-nuclear movement, anti-big-dam movement etc. And the movement which got so much importance in the newspapers and became a major headline in Kerala was the movement, was the Silent Valley movement, which I have already mentioned. The people’s science activists of Bengal on a whole have respectful attitude towards its Keralian counterpart and both the ‘Jana’ and ‘Gana’ fractions of West Bengal have a deep respect to the workshop, the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad now for the convenience of determining the nature of true science in Bengal to declare aims of both ‘Jana’ and ‘Gana’ group can be compared. If we first mention the aims of the Janavijnan group, it’s like to make people conscious about the use of natural

resources, to encourage the use of science in daily lives, to develop consciousness among people regarding environment etc., to help scientific enquiry and activities, to struggle against superstition and scientific concepts, to struggle for making appropriate policy and program, so that people can get the tools of science, like that. By contrast, the aims and objectives of Ganavijnan Samanway Kendra, which is the major organization belongs to the Ganavijnan group, this group in its official documents said that their aim of the people's science movement is to spread science in simple language and through the vernacular so that the common people can understand it; to make every person literate, scientifically rational, and a believer in humanity, to oppose the production or input of those goods which are adverse to the interest of greater society, to oppose that science and technology that acts as a tool of the consumerist culture of the elite or the privileged class. For the sake of the people, it demands for implementation of the pro-people health policy, expansion of scientific treatment facility and to oppose all kinds of unscientific treatments. Now I've been discussing the aims and objectives of two major people's science obligations of Bengal in the comparative perspective one make the idea about the concept of people's science as it is practiced in West Bengal and we have also mentioned the practice in people's science in Kerala. However to what extent these aims of the Bengal's people's science movement have been followed and realized is a different issue altogether. Now the movement and the conceptual development of people's science are a twin causes. Nowadays the approaches to governmental schemes or established institutions are also rapidly changing with the notions of globalization and commercialization of markets. The minds of the common people are also being gradually influenced by the growing impact of the media and the consumerist world. Thus both the developments of concepts and movement are not related with the global phenomena. With the newer trend of scientific and technological advancements like computer, internet, smartphone etc. there is again a possibility of confining science within the coterie of an elite and privileged class. So to conquer this tendency the need for development of people's science is getting much important than before. And here to have that history of practicing people's science in two major states of India - Kerala and Bengal and this history helps us to develop people's science in future.

Thank you.

PERSPECTIVES OF THE BENGALI INTELLIGENTSIA ON THE MAHARASHTRIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE: A LATE COLONIAL EXERCISE

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Good afternoon. At the outset I should thank Professor Lipi Ghosh for inviting me as a speaker here. Next my best wishes goes to the renowned chairperson and other professors from universities and colleges and my dear students. So our story will start from the popular lullaby “থোকা ঘুমালো, পাড়া জুড়ালো, বর্গী এল দেশে, বুলবুলিতে ধান খেয়েছে, খাজনা দেবে কিসে?” So, undivided Bengal and Maharashtra developed historical context since 18th Century. During the Peshwaship of Balaji Bajirao, the Maratha *bargirs* collected tax by means of force from Eastern India. Bengal was ruled by Nawab Alibardi Khan at that time. Bitter experiences in the method of collection and immense torture of the people led Gangaram, a contemporary poet to describe the trauma in his *Maharashtra Purana* in 1751-52. With the turn of the political affairs in favour of the colonial power, the status of the Marathas in Bengal was completely altered. The paper will try to focus on the process of this metamorphosis in their role. Memory of a trauma altered in favour of eulogizing a nation of heroes and protector of religion, cow and Brahmanas. Amateur historians and authors belonging to various section of literary practice created a popular tradition of exercise with a history of a heroic past. Their aim was to create a heroic identity of the people of Bengal who were known as physically weak. Later professional historians contributed to the enrichment of the exercise under discussion. Gradually the process mingled with other under-currents leading to the development of a tradition of exercise with the history of the Marathas or *Maharashtra Charcha*. Historical methodology will be followed with the aid of vernacular literature, conventional Maratha history and archival sources. Though the Maratha heroes were filled with the ideology of patriotism yet the cultural exercise under discussion in Bengal was an offshoot of nationalism in the western sense of the term. The western- educated Bengali litterateur projected them as the face of Indian nationalism. The medieval heroic past of India was selected for popular consumption. The background of the exercise may be connected to the development of inter-presidency connection between Calcutta and Mumbai specifically Indian Association and Puna Sarbajanik Sabha. Surendranath Bandyopadhyay and Gopal Krishna Gokhale were foremost among the enthusiastic politicians aiming towards building a national political platform. The jubilee of Queen Victoria’s coronation became a meeting place of the Indian political milieu. With the emergence of extremism, Aurobindo

Ghosh and Bal Gangadhar Tilak developed a close association. Tilak and his associates supported the cause of movement against Bengal partition. Several meetings were held in Mumbai and appeal was made to boycott British products. Other cementing factors included the introduction of 'Pax Britannica' with its components of expansion of communication system. All India Services uniform legal system. Introduction of print culture diminished the gap between the author and the reader as well as the urban and rural educated milieu. A sense of uniformity as a bonded nation brought far - away regions closer. Significantly the imposition of punitive acts in Maharashtra created an uproar in Bengal, while the pain of Bengal partition was agonizing Maharashtra. Chhatrapati Shivaji was the central character of the exercise with Maratha history. Tagore in one of his poems described him as *Bangalir Pran* - life force of the Bengalis. The exercise intensified since the latter half of the nineteenth century. Shivaji's spirit of sacrifice and readiness to serve the royal duties of building up the Maratha nation on behalf of Guru Ramdas deeply impressed Tagore, who discovered a saint-soldier in him. Maratha tradition of *Bhakti* was popularized in Bengal. He translated the *abhangs* of Tukaram. Some authors followed him and projected the *Bhakti* tradition in the pages of renowned journals. However Tagore's observations on the politics of Post-Shivaji Maharashtra placed him as a critique of narrow nationalism and communalism. Sakharan Ganesh Deuskar was another link between the two presidencies. His research on Maratha history was deep-rooted and articles were published in *Sahitya*, *Prabasi* etc. He contributed pamphlets on Maratha history namely *Shivajir Diksha*, *Shivaji* on the basis of Marathi sources like *Chitnish Bakhar*, *Shivadigvijay*, *Dasbodh* etc. and projected Shivaji as an apostle of *Sanatana* Hinduism struggling against Mughal authority for the restoration of *Swadharma*. In this context he focused on the role of Ramdas in the awakening of the nation and introduction of *Maharashtradharm*. This phase constitutes the ultra-Hinduist writings based on Maratha history which sometimes neglected the historical facts regarding the non-communal image of Shivaji. Mr. Deuskar was the chief adviser of the Chandannagar Samity and teacher of the Anushilan Samity also. Naturally he was pioneer to arouse deep reverence for the Maratha hero among the revolutionaries of Bengal. Secret government documents mentioned the activities of several daring activists who shared the legacy of politics of bomb, and his pamphlets on Shivaji was discovered during the police raid at the office of Suhrid Samity of Maimansingh. His *Desher Kotha* was also very popular among the revolutionaries of Bengal. The content was extended abroad, Bipin Chandra Pal, B. D. Savarkar, G. S. Mashal published *Swaraj*, a journal from London. Compatriotship brought closer Birendranath Chattopadhyay, Savarkar, Pal and others. Several Maratha revolutionaries remained in close contact with their counterparts in Bengal. The example of Chapekar brothers and other revolutionaries

electrified the youth of Bengal. Matilal Roy, a revolutionary from Chandannagar recapitulated the foment in spirit of revolution and popularity of Tilak within Bengal. Observance of Shivaji festival, Veerashtami and Pratapaditya Utsav were some of the components of the form of cultural nationalism in Bengal. The festival created a stir and in this context contemporary Hindu, Brahmo and Muslim columnists contributed thoughtful essays in renowned journals. Historically the Marathas led a long struggling life; therefore they were admired by the Bengali Hindus, who on their part were criticized for their alleged 'effeminacy'. The matter needs a little explanation. Since 1770's Bengali Hindus were criticized in the company's official papers because of their alleged effeminacy. With the emergence of physical culture movement, concept of *Kshatriyatwa* crept into the Indian psyche and influenced the process of self-definition. The exercise with Maratha history and internalization of Shivaji and other heroes was an integral part of this projection. The use of selected portions of history for the purpose of propagation of a heroic past is a well-known device for the purpose of dissemination of nationalism. In our context pre-modern Maratha history became a fertile ground to numerous authors, playwrights, essayists, academic writers, who selected popular portions for their literary creations. The history of a glorious past with added ingredients of heroism, self-immolation, fighting scenes, tuned with patriarchal supremacy earned great popularity. The popular psychology sought a respite from the mundane features of the bondage, staging these writings and plays. Regional, cultural and linguistic differences could be overcome in face of the turbulent reality of colonial bondage. Beginning with *Anguriya Binimoy*, in 1857 a romantic novel by Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay, alumni of the Hindu College, Maratha history centric literature included the contributions of several academicians belonging to different genres of Bengal's culture and political life. I'm not going to the details of their names and their writings, but I should point to a fact that Motiur Khan, Kaikobad, Ismail Hussain Siraji and other academicians were more critical of the activities of the Marathas and sometimes deviated from historical evidences. They presented an alternative version of the Maratha heroic past. With the beginning of studies on regional history in Calcutta University in 1917, the exercise with Maratha history got uplift. In *Shivaji and his Times*, *House of Shivaji* and numerous articles on Maratha history, Acharya Jadunath Sarkar left an invaluable mark of his proficiency in the application of scientific methodology as strict historical logic, especially on a theme which is tinged with emotions since at least 50 years back. The trend was followed by Surendranath Sen, Pratul Chandra Gupta, Anil Chandra Bandyopadhyay and Pranjal Kumar Bhattacharya who enriched the new corners of Maratha history with the aid of original source materials, application of scientific methodology and objective analysis of facts. Newspaper media also played an interesting role

in this context, one example I refer to the reporting of the Ramosis uprising in 1879 in Bengali by Dakshinaranjan Chattopadhyay. He was the editor of *Samachar Chandrika*. His article based on that uprising *Apurba Bharat Uddhar* created a great impact at Calcutta. Another point was that, the drama *Hirakchurna* by Amritalal Bose highlighted the injustice with Malhar Rao Gaikwar, who was actually penalized for alleged poisoning of the British resident and it created a lively debate in the city. Shishir Das observed that the drama was instrumental behind the enactment of the Dramatic Performances Act in 1876. Another point of interaction was the image of the Marathi women. The conventional Hindu lifestyle and liberty of movement of the Maratha women projected them as icon in Bengal. Reference may be made to *Bombai chitra* by Satyendranath Tagore. Acharya Jadunath Sarkar and Surendranath Sen also referred to the historical role of the Maratha women and they corroborated their liberty as the underlying source of increase of national strength and enrichment of the social life of Maharashtra. They were projected as epitome of Hindu womanhood. The presence of Pandita Ramabai and Mataji Tapaswinibai in the city was a great experience. Ramabai was felicitated by the Pundits of Sanskrit College on account of her profuse knowledge of Sanskrit literature and prestigious titles of Pandita and Saraswati were conferred on her. Probably this was the first event of felicitating a woman for her knowledge in India. Mataji Tapaswinibai founded the Adi Mahakali Pathshala, where the guiding principle of education was to teach, to train the little daughters of Hindus in the *Sanatana* Hindu Shastric ideology. The school earned great popularity because it catered to the taste of imparting *Desi* education to their daughters who were expected to uphold indigenous tradition and value system. Maharashtra, a conservatory of Vedic culture became the symbol of India, the allegedly glorious, prosperous, virtuous, land of the Vedas and the Hindus. Despite criticism from the Brahmo and the Muslim corners the process continued for nearly a century. On the high side the process partly contributed to the sharpening of communal cleavage. It also led to the development of vicarious nationalism because most of the authors directed their anti-colonial observations via anti-Muslim comments. In conclusion the third dimension of the exercise may be pointed out. In one way it brought two distinct cultures closer to each other and strengthened national bonding. Some writers for example, Kaikobad, tried to explain the broader impact of the third battle of Panipath bringing political crisis for the Hindus and the Muslims in his *Mahashmashan Kavya*. Reference may be made to the writings of biographer Manoranjan Gupta and playwright Sachindranath Sengupta who indicated the emergence of the common people under the leadership of Shivaji. They portrayed the medieval Maratha Society in the light of their own political experience. Therefore their hero abolished the religious as well as class divides and founded a nation.

Some academicians learnt Marathi and Bengali and enriched the literary heritage by valuable translations. The effort to create a broad base national culture definitely enriched the Indian heritage and facilitated the nation-building process.

Thank you.

RASOGOLLA MEETS KALAKAND: STORY OF A SWEET INTERFACE BETWEEN BENGAL AND RAJASTHAN

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A very very sweet afternoon to all of you. First of all, I'd like to express my heartiest gratitude to the organizers, especially to Professor Lipi Ghosh ma'am for giving me this wonderful opportunity. I'm also very thankful to my Ph.D supervisor Dr. Sabyasachi Chatterjee for his continuous support. Thankfully it's the post-lunch session and I'm the last speaker. My paper is a bit appetizing. So let's start with a very, very commonly heard Bengali phrase - “তাহলে একটু মিষ্টিমুখ হয়ে যাক।” Bengal. A-ha! the sweetest part of India. Bengalis are very fond of sweets, so Sandesh, Rasagolla or the Chana-based sweets became the emblem of Bengaliness. Surprisingly this particular culinary culture, I mean the culture of making sweets using cottage cheese or chana, has not been flourished much earlier, sometimes around the 18th Century. Colonial town Calcutta played a very very important role in this regard. Calcutta was the place where the present day icons of so called traditional Bengali culture were either born or transformed into icons. Calcutta served as a melting pot. Being the earliest and the most important imperial centre, Calcutta had a special glamour, as well as a large market. This glamour and hope for many earnings, colonial Calcutta attracted many people from different regions to settle here. This migration and immigration process helped to create a new mixed up culture, as well as an open and very flexible society. This colonial Calcutta culture flowed towards the periphery and gradually it took the shape of some kind of a standard Bengali culture, or the mainstream culture. Later in our times it is most commonly coined as the traditional Bengali culture, a culture which is much different from the culture depicted in the Mangalkavyas and the Vaishnava literature of the medieval and the early medieval period. This also happened with the Rajasthanis. In fact, in terms of culture Bengal had hardly any relation with the pure Rajasthani, or even standard or mainstream Rajput culture. The culture with which Bengal interacted is Marwari culture, a hybrid culture adopted by the Agarwals, Oswals and Manesoris etc., the migrant traders of Rajasthan, who travelled from Rajasthan to different towns and cities across northern and eastern India. Several Marwari traders, ostensibly from Rajasthan may have been from lineages that had already spent several generations in places like Haryana, UP and Bihar, before entering, before coming to

Murshidabad and ultimately to Calcutta. Therefore the Marwari culture or the 'Non-Bengali culture', as the Bengalis often remarked and the Rajputana culture have not many similarities. My paper is dealing with the interface between these two cultures, I mean the present day traditional Bengali culture and the Marwari culture. Since time is short I cannot spend many words on the journey of Chhana sweets. Just in a nutshell, the journey began sometimes around the 18th century. These among the pre Calcutta phase sweets - Monda, Khanda, Pheni, Nadu, Pulipupi, Pitha, sweetened curd and rice puddings. The first phase of Chhana sweets can be termed as the Sandesh phase. It is still unknown that exactly when the Sandesh emerged. By the 18th Century, Guposandesh of Guptipara became very popular, as also Manohara of Janai. The first generation of Calcutta sweet makers had mostly migrated from either Hooghly or Burdwan, or Nadia. By the first half of 19th Century, Calcutta became very popular for Sandesh. Paran Chandra Nag, Girish Chandra Dey were some renowned sweet-makers of that time. During the later half of the 19th Century, syrup based sweets like ledikeni, rasagolla etc. became popular. Bhim Chandra Nag, Nabin Chandra Dash were the most popular sweet-makers of this phase. The last quarter of the 19th Century and the first half of the last century witnessed various experiments of Chhana sweets by using different ingredients like Malai or cream, saffron, pistachios, almonds, raisins etc. Experiments were not only done in ingredients but also in naming of the sweets, very important - Baikunthabhog, Abar Khabo, Paradise, Dilkhush, Manoranjana and so on. Krishnachandra Das, Dwarikanath Ghosh, Ganesh Chandra Mullick, Ashutosh Sen are the names of some renowned sweet-makers of that time. By 1950's a new trend had emerged, Bhujawala culture, the sweet and snack making culture of Rajasthan, especially of Bikaner. In this context, I think it is needed to spend few words on the Bikaneri sweets of Rajasthan. Then it would be easier to understand the difference between the pure Bikaneri Bhujawala culture and the so called Marwari or Non-Bengali Bhujawala culture of Bengal, especially of Calcutta. Churma and Churma laddu are the most important delicacies of Rajasthan. Besan laddu is also very famous, originated either in Pakistan or in Braj region. Kalakand also gained very popularity in Rajasthan. There are two kinds of Rajasthani variations of kalakand - one is Alwari kalakand and another is Ajmeri kalakand. Now just make quick recall. What kind of sweets we usually find in any Bhujawala's shop located in Bengal? Kalakand may be the only sweet which has at least some kind of real Rajasthan connection. Other than this we generally find there gulabjamun, laddu etc. Laddu means neither of churma, nor of besan, but of motichur - motichur ki laddu. All of these sweets are more connected with the halwai culture of Northern India. This happened because of the hybridness of the Marwari culture and the huge cultural influence of North India on them. In 1950's Gangabishen Agarwal,

popularly known as Haldiram, his son established a manufacturing unit of Bikaneri bhujia and sweets in Calcutta. Within a short period, he understood that the Marwaris of Calcutta are more acquainted with the halwai taste. Therefore he started to make experiments with these two tastes and gave a new shape to the Bhujiaiwala or so called 'Non-Bengali sweet-making culture' of Bengal. Later many other Non-Bengali gourmet shops also enriched this cuisine. Mention may be made of Bhikharam Chandmal, Gangor, Chappanbhog and many more. But it should be remembered that this culture popularized among the Bengalis not before 1990's. Now we should look to the interactions between these two cultures - use of saffron in Rasgulla, use of chhana in making kalakand and the most important interaction, Bikaneri rasagolla, I should say Bikaneri rasgulla, proper accent - a hard and dry rasgulla. So now we have 'notun gurer kalakand' and Bikaneri rasgulla. We have laddu, gulaabjamuns selling 'prasiddha mishtanno bhandars', as well as rasgulla or Bengali chhana sweets selling Bhujiaiwala shops. Before I conclude, I would like to look towards one question - how was the interaction process, I mean was it very smooth or not? In corporation of Marwari sweets as Bhujiawalas sweets and namkeens within the Bengali palette was not done much earlier. Our love for laddu, gulaabjamun is not very old. It gained much popularity during 1990's. But even till date there is a thin thread of conflict exists between the sandesh-rasagolla, which is our culture and laddu-gulaabjamun that is 'Non-Bengali culture. So this was the main story of the sweet interface between Bengal and Rajasthan in a nutshell. There are many amalgamations and interactions as well as cultural conflicts, but ultimately all these relations have enriched our palette. Very recently another new trend has grown up and rapidly superseded all the regional varieties of sweet-making - entry of chocolate. Now we have chocolate rasagolla, chocolate sandesh, chocolate laddu, mishit doi, son papri and even chocolate pithepuli. Recently we're celebrating 100 years of Tollywood through making commemorative chocolate sweets. But still, I would say, it is again enriching our own palette. It doesn't matter if it is indigenous or alien. Let the Bengali sweet tooth continue likewise.

Thank you.

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